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COMPUTER +video GAMES

STARGLIDER II-
16bit games go into hyperdrive



JEZ SAN AND THE ARGONAUTS

LIKE BEING THERE – THE LATEST REAL LIFE SIMULATIONS

PLAYMASTERS: GAUNTLET II, SPACE HARRIER

NINTENDO EXCLUSIVE REVIEWS: PUNCH OUT, ZELDA, PRO WRESTLING

REVIEWED: DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE, ULTIMA V, MICKEY MOUSE, OVERLANDER, SUPER HANG-ON, ROAD BLASTERS, TYPHOON

OVERLANDER

THE ROAD GAME THAT BLASTS THE WAY





	'First Person' Perspective	'Fast Action Simulation'	'Armed Destruction'	'Stomach Churning Hilly Road'	'Player Controlled Vehicle Construction'	'First Class Magazine Reviews'	'Available on Home Computer'
Pole Position	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	N/A	✓
Pit Stop	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓
Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Outrun	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Road Blasters	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	N/A	✓
Chequered Flag	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
WEC Le Mans	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	N/A	✗
OVERLANDER	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

SCREENSHOTS ATARI ST

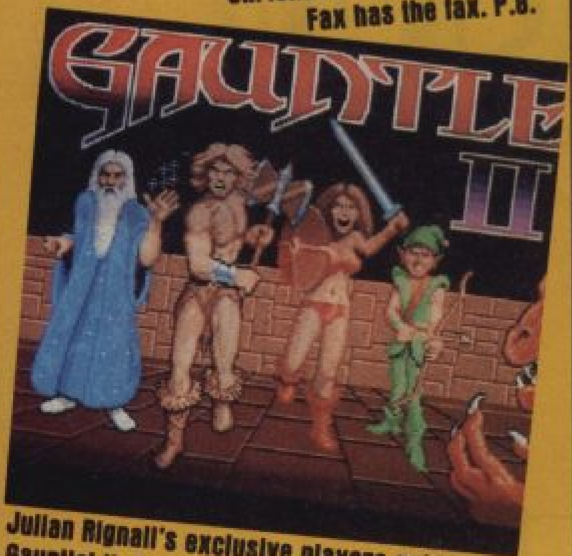




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Space Harrier mapped. P.8



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Stargilder II — C+VG's highest rated g

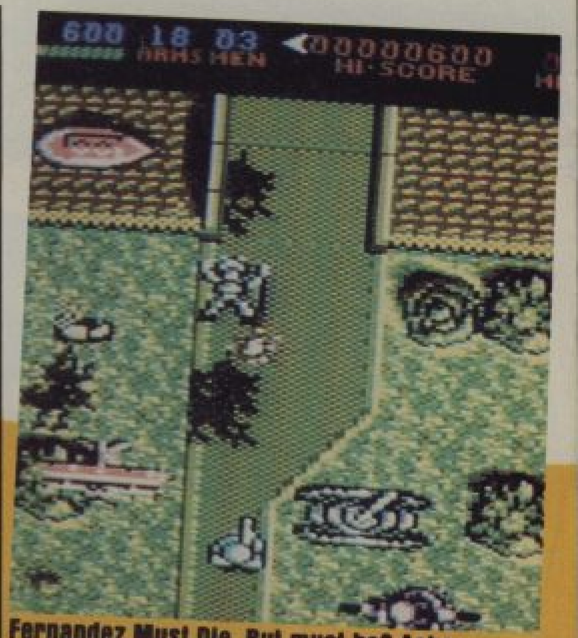
Editor: Eugene Lacey, Deputy Editor: Paul Boughton. Sub Editor: Seamus St. John. Staff Writer: Matt Bielby. Art Editor: Craig Kennedy. Advertisement Manager: Garry Williams. Sales Executive: S



Don't miss...

Something has happened in the game business. Games are now being developed first for 16 bit machines and converted later to 8 bits. It used to be the other way around. The change has happened very quickly and almost without anyone noticing. C+VG's message to gamers who don't own an ST or Amiga is don't panic. Almost all of the decent releases will still be coming out for your Speccy, 64, or Amstrad. C+VG is not going to abandon its eight bit owning friends. We have made a number of changes to deal with this changing situation. All reviews now carry an Update at the end of the review with the very latest information about the version for your computer. All games are launched for a variety of systems and all our reviews are based on more than one version.

Other 'Not To Be Missed' features this month are Jez San and the Argonauts and Playmasters.



Fernandez Must Die. But must he? Asks John Minson? P.130.



Win a trip to Disneyland with Mickey Mouse. P.32.



Daley is looking good on the ST. First reviews. P.18.



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Dragonroar — the best beginners FRP package. P.90.



Meet the Egron Commander. P.46.

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SPECTRU





Fax

Delayed Action

After many delays, the Amstrad version of Virgin's *Action Force* toy tie-in is nearing completion. The player takes the role of Wild Bill, who flies a helicopter over a smooth-scrolling landscape protecting buggies from the marauding enemy forces.

The Spectrum and Commodore versions of *Action Force* were released to a lukewarm reception at the end of last year, and the Amstrad version is looking very similar to both. Still, if you're interested, it'll be available in early autumn, and will cost £8.95 on cassette.



Bitmap Bros Byte Back

The Bitmap Brothers, creators of the fabulous vertically scrolling *Xenon* (see *C + VG* June issue) are currently programming *Speedball*, a futuresport game featuring metallic graphics and fast and furious gameplay.

Two teams take to the field and fight for possession of a large steel ball with the help of a large and vicious array of weaponry. It certainly sounds thrilling stuff, and will be available towards the end of the year on the Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC priced £24.99, £24.99 and £29.99 respectively on Mirrorsoft's new Imageworks label.



Crisis Management

Hot on the heels of 2000AD getting extra colour pages comes *CRISIS*, a new fortnightly colour comic from Britain's Fleetway Publications. It features two 14 page stories from top 2000AD creators, including Carlos "Strontium Dog" Ezquerra and writer Pat Mills, who was originally responsible for 2000AD 11 years ago.

The two initial tales are "Third World War", a very topical and political strip about the impact of Western corporations on the third world and "The New Statesman", an "adult" superhero story cum political thriller along the lines of "Watchmen".

With the first issue available on September 17, CRISIS promises to be the most exciting development in British comics this decade. Kick yourself if you don't pick up the first issue: if nothing else, have you seen the price 2000AD No1 goes for these days?

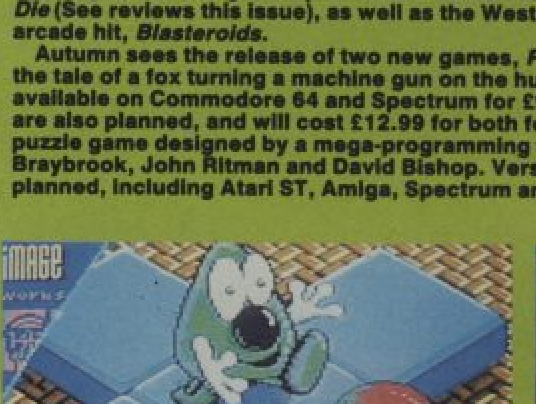
Fleetway Publications 1988

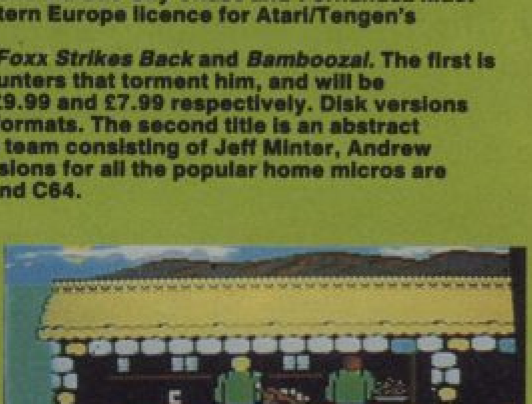


Mirror Image

Mirrorsoft Publishing has introduced a new label, Imageworks, as a flagship banner for the majority of it's new games products. First releases include *Sky Chase* and *Fernandez Must Die* (See reviews this issue), as well as the Western Europe licence for Atari/Tengen's arcade hit, *Blasteroids*.

Autumn sees the release of two new games, *Foxx Strikes Back* and *Bamboozal*. The first is the tale of a fox turning a machine gun on the hunters that torment him, and will be available on Commodore 64 and Spectrum for £9.99 and £7.99 respectively. Disk versions are also planned, and will cost £12.99 for both formats. The second title is an abstract puzzle game designed by a mega-programming team consisting of Jeff Minter, Andrew Braybrook, John Ritman and David Bishop. Versions for all the popular home micros are planned, including Atari ST, Amiga, Spectrum and C64.

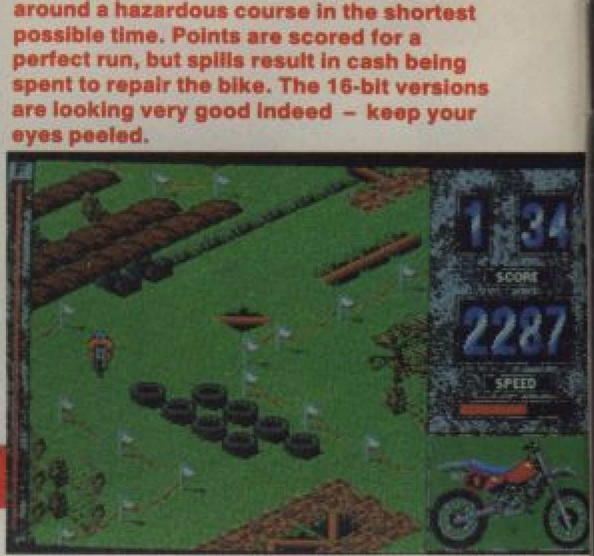




Burning Rubber

Mastertronic's moto-cross racing game, *Motorbike Madness* is released at the start of September on the MAD label for the Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC, and on the Mastertronic label for all 8-bit machines.

The idea is to ride an off-road motorbike around a hazardous course in the shortest possible time. Points are scored for a perfect run, but spills result in cash being spent to repair the bike. The 16-bit versions are looking very good indeed – keep your eyes peeled.

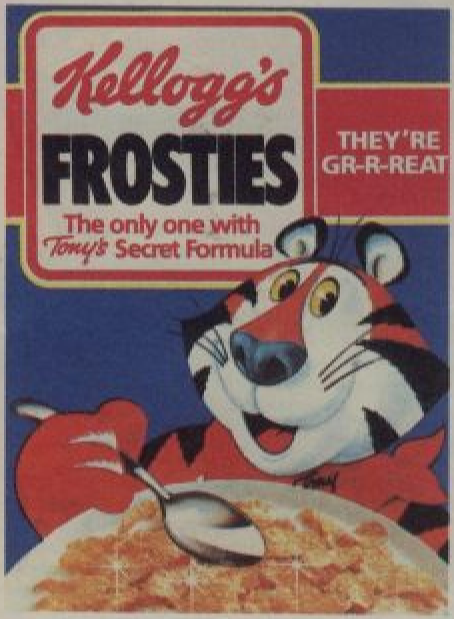


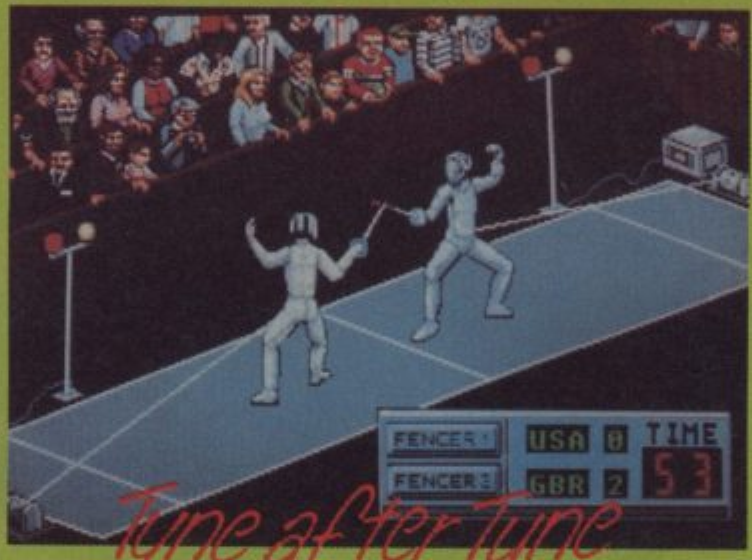
CRL's cereal

When a press release arrived at the office with a mini box of Frosties attached, the entire office stopped to wonder ... Could the latest computer tie-in be a Tony the Tiger game?

No, nothing so raunchy – the cereal (which incidently was eaten by C + VG's greedy gobblin' Ads manager, Garry Williams) was to announce that CRL has just acquired the rights to the Kellogs Tour Bike race which ran between August the 9th and 14th. The release date of the game is due to coincide with the race, so it should be on the shelves by now ...







Tyne after Tyne

Tynesoft's *Summer Olympiad* enters the Olympic Games cash-in race with all versions ready for release in time for the events. Individual Olympic sports covered include fencing, diving, clay pigeon shooting, hurdles, triple jump and others, at £9.95/£14.95 C64, £19.95 ST/Amiga, and £24.95 PC.

Live and let Die

Elite's *Aquablast*, a 3D speedboat shoot 'em up is now to become *Live and Let Die*, and will appear on the Domark label. Elite is also taking over the marketing of Domark products.



Gilt edged Pepsi

Soft drinks mega-company, Pepsi, has climbed into bed with US Gold on a large-scale cross-markets promotions and sponsorship project for the UK. US Gold has plans to launch a compilation – which will include *World Class Leaderboard* and *Sidearms* – under the Pepsi slogan, *The Taste of America*. It'll only be available to buyers of a Pepsi 6-pack at a special price of £4.99. Meanwhile, US Gold's conversion of the Sega arcade hit *Thunderblade* has been named Pepsi Challenge Game of The Year and will be played by contenders on a giant video wall at the PC Show in September. Apparently, this is only the start of a number of co-operative deals with Pepsi, which Pepsi say is "The ultimate weapon in the Cola wars". We at C + VG are wondering whether Coca Cola will respond to this challenge . .



Ten pounds of Chops

A new compilation on the Star Games label is Karate Ace, an assemblage of seven karate games. Highlights are Bruce Lee and Avenger; lowlights are Way of the Tiger and Samurai Trilogy. Others included in the pack are Kung-Fu Master, the Way of the Exploding Fist and Uchi Mata – which isn't really a karate game.

Still, there's not going to be many fightin' 'n' fumpin' fans who'll complain about that. The compilation is available for the C64, Spectrum and Amstrad and costs £9.99.

AMSTRAD TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addicitve
2	Yogi Bear – Alternative
3	ACE – Cascade
4	Air Wolf – Encore
5	Rocky Horror Show – Alternative
6	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore
7	Target Renegade – Imagine
8	Beach Buggy Sim – Firebird
9	Fruit Machine Sim – Code Masters
10	We Are The Champions – Ocean

New entries Rocky Horror Show and Target Renegade are in fact the only two new entries in the overall top fifty. Despite the fact that they sell fewer individual games, the ST value market share now exceeds that of the Amstrad.

SPECTRUM TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addicitve
2	European Five-a-side – Firebird
3	ACE – Cascade
4	Yogi Bear – Alternative
5	Rocky Horror Show – Alternative
6	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore
7	Air Wolf – Encore
8	Ghostbusters – Mastertronic
9	Target Renegade – Imagine
10	Beach Buggy Sim – Firebird

Speccy sales continue to fall, dropping now to 41.3%, lower than it's been all year. The Spectrum version of Footie Manager continues to be the best selling game on any format in the country.

C64 TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addicitve
2	ACE – Cascade
3	Yogi Bear – Alternative
4	European Five-a-side – Firebird
5	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore
6	Football Manager – Addictive
7	Rally Driver – Alternative
8	Target Renegade – Imagine
9	Steve Davis Sn. – Blue Ribbon
10	Samantha Fox Stp. Poker – React

Football manager follows its new sequel back into the top ten, as the C64 share of the market rises to its highest market share level in months.

Fax

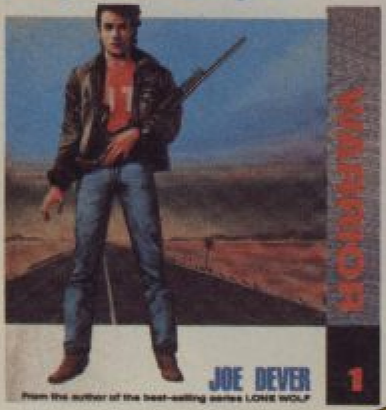
Forbidden fruit

Forbidden Planet, Britain's biggest comic and science fiction store chain, just celebrated its tenth anniversary by opening a new flagship store in London's New Oxford Street. C + VG were up at the opening bash in a shop that looked for all the world like a Virgin Megastore without the records, in the company of Willie Rushton, Adam "Batman" West and a host of Rocky Horror and Night of the Living Dead rejects. The old Forbidden Planet site will now become Murder One, the UK's first specialist crime and Mystery bookshop.

Comic collectors who live in Cambridgeshire will also be interested to know that Forbidden Planet has just opened a specialist SF/Fantasy comic shop in Cambridge.

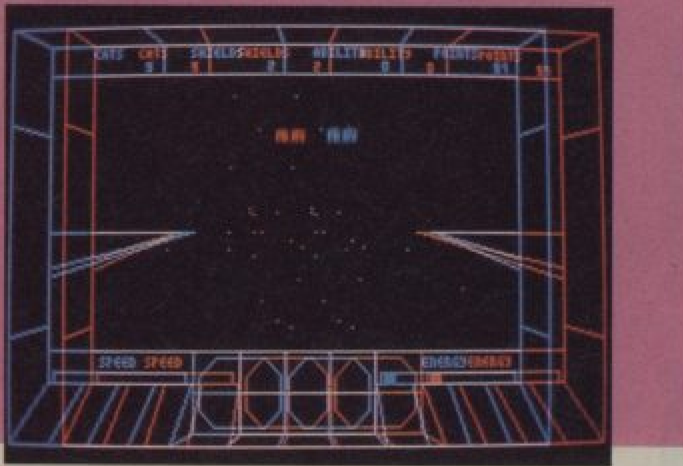
Freeway fever

From role playing gamesbook pioneer and C + VG pal Joe Dever comes Highway Holocaust, the first of a new, more adult series of fantasy adventures. Joe, creator of the very popular Lone Wolf series of sword and sorcery gamesbooks, now turns his skills to post-holocaust America in the next century, and a very Mad Max-inspired hero. Shotguns, biker gangs and Petrol explosions abound in this first "Freeway Warrior" adventure, and it's all great fun if you're into this sort of solitaire roleplaying. £2.50 from Beaver Books with more to follow, and look out for the Joe Dever/Lone Wolf computer game coming soon from Audiogenic.



It's a 3D Wander

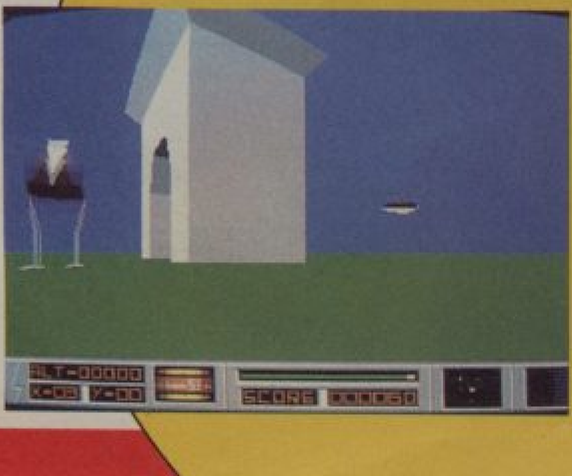
Wanderer, Elite's latest title is a 3D game which they describe as space poker. We don't yet give away 3D blue and red glasses with the mag – that's why the screen shot looks a bit funny – but glasses will be supplied with the game. Oh well, if you fancy a hand or two with a mysterious all-powerful alien, and want to look an idiot at the same time, look out for the game at the end of the month on ST and AMIGA at £19.99 and £24.99 respectively, and all 8-bit formats.



London Calling

CRL has been busy lately, putting together a couple of games for the debut of their Actual Screenshots 16-bit label. *Siege of London* is a currently trendy filled-in vector graphics affair, based around the notion of an alien invasion of the capital. The screenshot shows no alien bird thing bouncing up and down next to Marble Arch, a sight you'll all be able to enjoy at the end of August on the Amiga at £24.95, with an ST version to follow.

Their other 16-bit release will be *I Ludicrous*, a comic Roman game that'll appear in late October/early November on the Amiga.





ATARI ST TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addicitve
2	Carrier Command – Rainbird
3	Dungeon Master – Mirrorsoft
4	P. Beardsley's F/B – Grand Slam
5	Gauntlet 2 – US Gold
6	Captain Blood – Infogrames
7	Out Run – Sega/US Gold
8	Bionic Commando – Go!
9	Fire and Forget – Titus
10	Ikari Warriors – Elite

Pete Beardsley and Fire and Forget are both new entries, and Ikari re-enters the chart. Carrier Command is pushed off the number one spot by Footie Manager 2.

ALL FORMATS COMBINED TOP TEN

1	Football Manager 2 – Addicitve
2	ACE – Cascade
3	Yogi Bear – Alternative
4	Frank Bruno's Boxing – Encore
5	Air Wolf – Encore
6	Steve Davis Sn. – Blue Ribbon
7	European Five-a-side – Firebird
8	Rocky Horror Show – Alternative
9	Target Renegade – Imagine
10	Way of Exploding Fist – M/tronic

Football Manager 2 continues to dominate the chart, the Spectrum version just outselling the C64 which enters the chart at number two, if you were to think of each format as a separate game.

AMIGA TOP FIVE

1	Interceptor – Electronic Arts
2	AAARGH – Melbourne House
3	Buggy Boy – Elite
4	Fire and Forget – Titus
5	P. Beardsley's F/B – Grand Slam

The Amiga chart pretty closely echoes the ST chart, with the same new entries and 22 percent of the market in terms of value to the other 16-bit format.

HEROES OF THE LANCE

ARCADE ACTION

HEROES OF THE LANCE marks the first computer action game that re-creates the epic battle between good and evil on the world of Krynn.
Controlling eight Companions, each with different specialised attributes and skills, guide these brave adventurers deep into the treacherous ruins of the temple XaK Tsaroth to retrieve the precious Disks of Mishakal.
As you descend into the Abyss, the Companions must defeat the hordes of monstrous Draconians in hand-to-hand combat, deal with powerful magic and survive the onslaught of attacks from giant spiders, skeletal undead and countless other terrors.
But your final obstacle makes these monstrosities innocuous by comparison. The platinum disks you seek are guarded by Khisanth, an ancient black dragon. And there is but one way to vanquish this mighty beast...
...find the key to destroy Khisanth or you are doomed to failure.

CBM 64/128
£9.99 tape
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SPECTRUM 48/128K
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AMSTRAD
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£14.99 disk
IBM PC & COMPATIBLES
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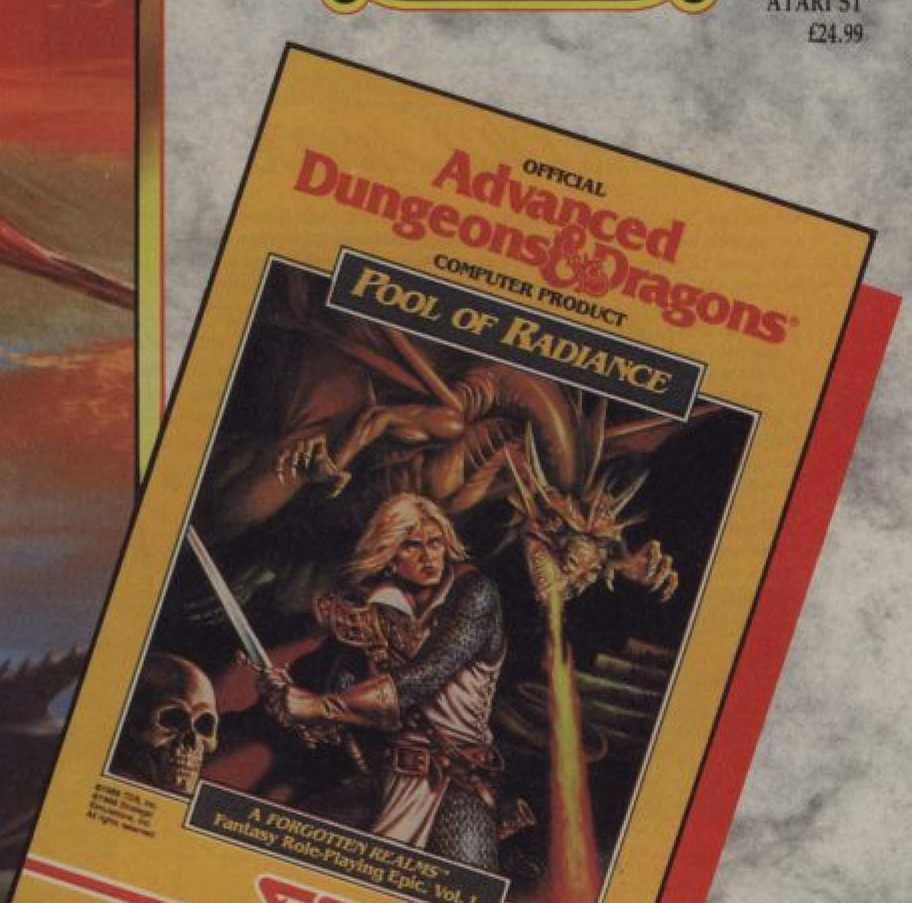
POOL OF RADIANCE

FANTASY ROLE PLAYING

Located on the northern shore of the Moonsea in the Forgotten Realms, the fabled city of Phlan had been overrun by monsters led by a mysterious leader. Your quest: discover the identity of this evil force.
Pool of Radiance adheres faithfully to the legendary Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ fantasy role playing systems. No detail is missed including 6 player characters; computer controlled non-player characters; the Adventurers' Journal packed with history, maps and clues and the Translation Wheel that converts Elvish and Dwarvish writing to English. The gameplay is exhilarating and the graphics state of the art – portrait displays, 3D perspective, tactical combat display and personalised weapons selections compile to form the ultimate breakthrough in fantasy role-playing computer games.



CBM 64/128
£9.99 tape
£14.99 disk
AMIGA
£24.99
IBM PC
& COMPATIBLES
£24.99
ATARI ST
£24.99



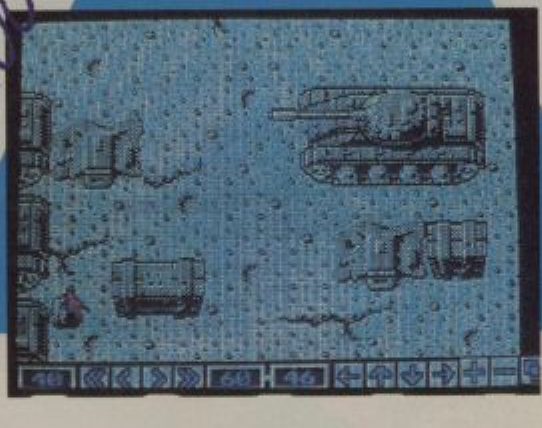
SSI™ STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS INC

U.S. GOLD®

Fax

Rambo Returns

A guaranteed biggie for Christmas will be Ocean's *Rambo 3* game, based on everybody's favourite western warmonger. Monosylabic mayhem will be all yours for £7.95 Spec (pic), £8.95 Amstrad/C64 tape, £12.95 C64 disk, £14.95 Amstrad disk.



Savage

Firebird has recently signed up Probe Software, authors of many of US Gold's arcade conversions. The first title of this collaboration is to be Savage, a three-part, multiload game that's set for a Christmas release.

In the first part of the game, the Savage runs through the horizontally scrolling levels of a castle, avoiding the marauding castle inhabitants and killing giant guardians en route, in *Trantor* fashion. Next comes a Space Harrier type 3D sections where the hero is guided through a hazardous terrain of obstacles. Finally, he returns to the castle as a bird and rescues his chums.

The game will be released on all 16-bit and 8-bit formats; prices are yet to be announced.



Star Wars in miniature

Players of the *Star Wars* RPG and collectors of lead miniatures should be pleased to hear that this month Citadel Miniatures plan to launch a range of 25 mm lead Star Wars figures. Their series features all the favourite Star Wars heroes and villians, including Darth Vader, Princess Leila, and a host of Stormtroopers.

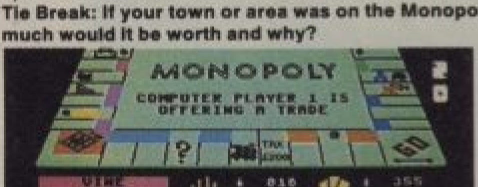
Monopoly Compo

Virgin has just recently brought out *Monopoly* for the home computer, and to celebrate the occasion we have 20 copies of the game to give away. You can chose from Spectrum cassette (£9.95), C64 cassette and disk (£12.95/£14.95) Amstrad Cassette and disk (£9.95/£14.95) or even BBC or MSX if you are that way inclined. Never let it be said we do nothing for you minority computer bods!

That's not all though! Our overall winner will get to take a trip to London to attend the World Monopoly Championships held at the Park Lane Hotel on the 17 October and meet the world champion. He may even get to play him! All we ask you to do is answer these simple Monopoly-type questions:

1) What is the most expensive area on a Monoploy board?
2) What is the cheapest area?
3) What are the names of the four stations on the board?

Tie Break: If your town or area was on the Monopoly board, how much would it be worth and why?



Name...

Address...

Computer...

Answer 1)..

Answer 2)..

Answer 3)..

Tie Break..

All answers should be in to us at the address on the contents page by September 10, though ST and Amiga owners will have to wait – their versions won't be out until October and 1989 respectively.

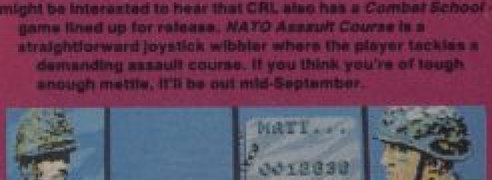
Action Men

Infogrames has two major 16-bit releases lined up for the near future. The first is *Hostages*, a tense action game that'll be appearing on Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC formats. The game involves the player taking control of an entire SAS team, who have to infiltrate an embassy and rescue the hostages therein. The graphics are very unusual, and the combination of arcade action and strategy looks like it could make for some interesting action. Keep your eyes peeled for a review in the coming months.

The other release is *Action Service*, an Atari ST title in which the player guides a tough 'n' meaty commando across a tortuous assault course. It certainly smacks of *Combat School*, but we'll just have to see . . .

Budding commandoes who enjoy waggling their joysticks might be interested to hear that CRL also has a *Combat School*-game lined up for release. *NATO Assault Course* is a straightforward joystick wibbler where the player tackles a demanding assault course. If you think you're of tough enough mettle, it'll be out mid-September.







Triad Trio

Industry giants Telecomsoft, Mirrorsoft a *Psygnosis* have signed a deal to co-operate in the development of the 16-bit market. Though they will still be competing for customers, they will be working together on joint-ventures to, erm, well, details are a bit vague at the moment, but you can be sure they'll be doing something. Why name it after the chinese mafia though? Very strange.

Gnomeward bound

Level 9 release the follow-up to *Gnome Ranger* in mid-October, hot on the heels of their illustrated adventure game *Lancelot*, based on the legend of King Arthur. *Lancelot* follows *Time and Magik* by being released with Mandarin, and promises to be a vast project closely following the "definitive" version of the tale as told by Sir Thomas Malory. Released at the start of September at £14.95 8-bit, £19.95 for 16-bit versions, it is said to be "the best game to date" from the specialist adventure house.

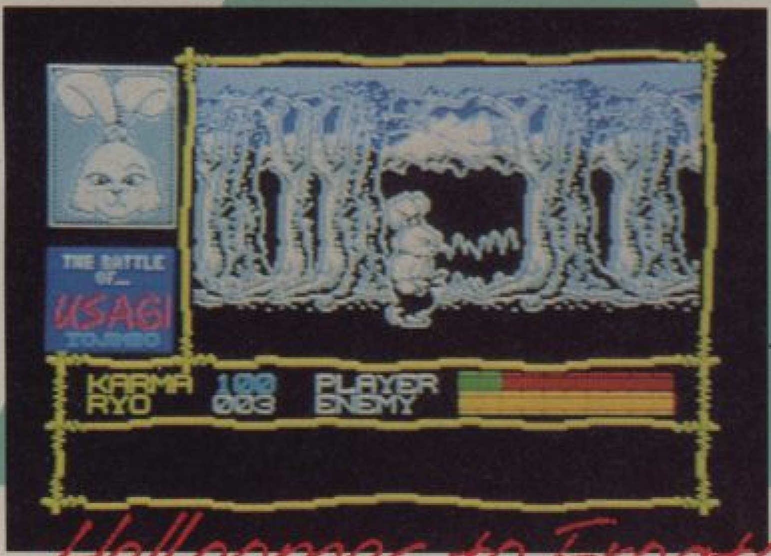
Gnome II: Ingrid's Back, on the other hand, is slightly more based in the modern world, with horrible heroine Ingrid Bottomlow returning home, only to find unscrupulous yuppie property developers planning to steamroll the place. Can she defeat them? Find out in mid-October at £14.95 on 8-bit systems, £19.95 16-bit or rush along for a preview at the PCW show.





Ronin Rabbit

Samurai Warrior – "It's brill!" says Rignall – the tale of a Ninja bunny, is out on Spectrum and Amstrad soon, following raves on the 64.



Hell comes to Frogtown

Forget the good movies, it's trash the kids want, and they don't come much trashier than the marvelously named *Hell Comes to Frogtown*, or the sword and sandal "spectacular" *The Barbarians.* Both feature old American pro-wrestling stars in the title roles, so you can guess how good the acting is. "Rowdy" Roddy Piper plays post-apocalyptic hero Sam Hell, a man who has to cope with both giant frog-like mutants and mad Nurse Spangle who locks him in a steel chastity belt, and uses him to impregnate the last surviving fertile human woman. Life doesn't sound too bad when you're the only potent male left in America!

Meanwhile, the Barbarian Brothers tag-team play hardboiled orphan twins in whose hands rests, surprise, surprise, the fate of the universe.

With both out on video now, bad movies have never had it so good!

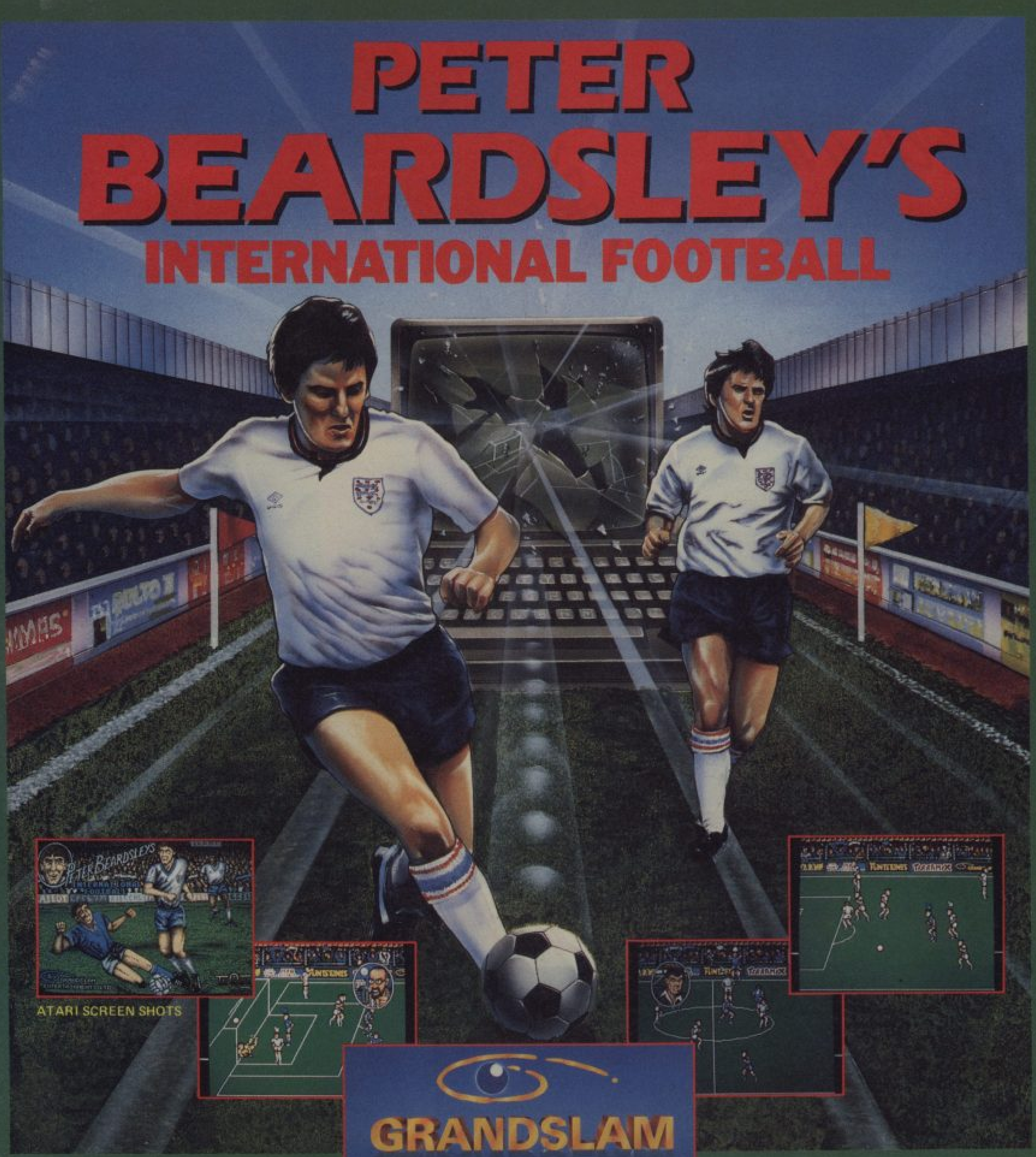




Name of Company: Telecomsoft.
Labels: Firebird, Rainbird, Silverbird.
When Started: Firebird started 1984, Rainbird – the first British 16-bit label – set up a year or so later. Telecomsoft is an autonomous company, owned by British Telecom.
Personnel: Paula Byrne – Big Chief. Paul Hibbard – Production and development publisher. Debbie Sillitoe – Marketing manager.
Contact: Customer services 01-379 5683.
First game: Firebird's first releases were two ranges of budget, including Buggy Blast (by Paul Hibbard) and Demons of Topaz on Firebird Gold, and Booty and Headache of Firebird Silver.
First Hit: Gyron, a maze strategy game with a huge ball in it, out in '85.
Biggest ever hit: Probably Elite in 1985/6 – "it sold a squillion", but Starglider may just have pipped it to the post.



Ones to watch out for: Starglider 2, Corruption, Vermintor, Whirligig, and others.
Critics Choice: By general consent in the office, their best games have been *Bubble Bobble*, *Elite*, *Starglider 2*, and *Carrier Command.* Julian Rignall is torn between *Twinkle goes hiking* "by some Hungarian bloke" and *The Comet Game*, produced to cash in on the recent return of Haley's Comet and featuring, amongst other "delights", a sub game where you had to stop the spaceship coffee supply getting mixed up with the, erm, contents of the toilet bowl." Eugene thinks the stick-man kung fu games Ninja was bad enough to overshadow all these however.



AVAILABLE FROM JUNE ONWARDS £8.95

ATARI ST +
AMIGA £19.95

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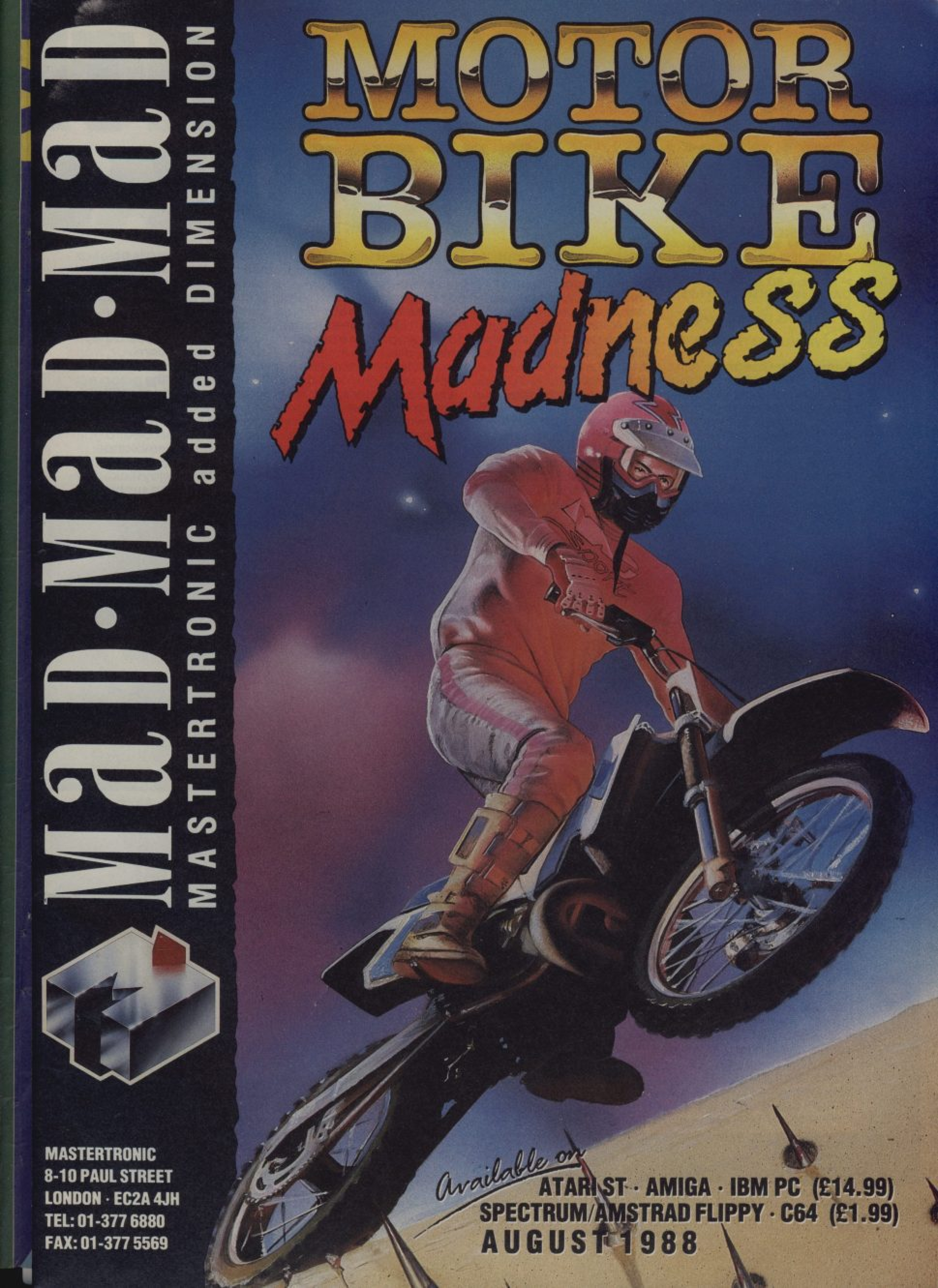
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DALEY T
OLYMPIC C

► **MACHINES: C64, SPECTRUM, AMDSTRAD, ST, AMIGA, IBM PC.**
► **SUPPLIER: OCEAN.**
► **PRICE: 8-BIT £9.99 CASS/£14.95 DISK, ST £19.95, AMIGA £24.95.**
► **VERSIONS TESTED: C64, SPECTRUM.**
► **REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.**

Remember Ocean's original *Daley Thompson* game? I certainly don't: it was back in the days when we still printed listings and a fresh-faced Julian Rignall had just become C+VG arcade champion. Pudding basin haircuts had never had it so good.

Yes, a lot of water's passed under the bridge since 1984, and Daley's pre-eminence as an athelete has grown in almost direct propoortion with Jaz's barnet. Now Olympic year has rolled around again, and with Daley still the great black hope of British track and field Ocean has presented us with a new attempt to represent the ten gruelling Decathlon events on your home computer.

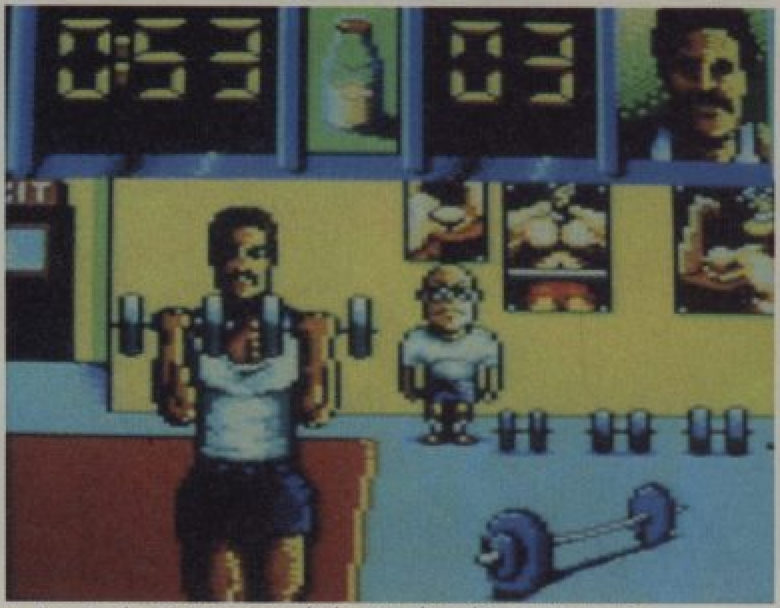
So is it any good? Well, yes it is: there is certainly no comparison with the old game. No more pink-skinned sprites with straight hair masquerading as our hero, no more ludicrous bugs that meant with five friends bashing away at different buttons on your computer you could get enough energy to run a three second 100 metres! In 1988 all the high scores for the various events have been worked out with the aid of Daley's own log book, meaning that with a perfect performance in every event it should still be impossible to beat the 9000 points top Decathaletes strive for.

There are similarities, however. The basic structure of the game is the same, as you work your way through 100 metres, long jump, shot putt and the rest towards a gold medal position. The whole button-bashing syndrome that wrecked so many Spectrums in the early '80s is back too, though this time the punishment is transferred to your joystick. Echoing the recent resurgence in the arcades of finger-strength over skill, *Olympic Challenge* sees almost a return to the heady days of *Hypersports* and *Track and Field*.

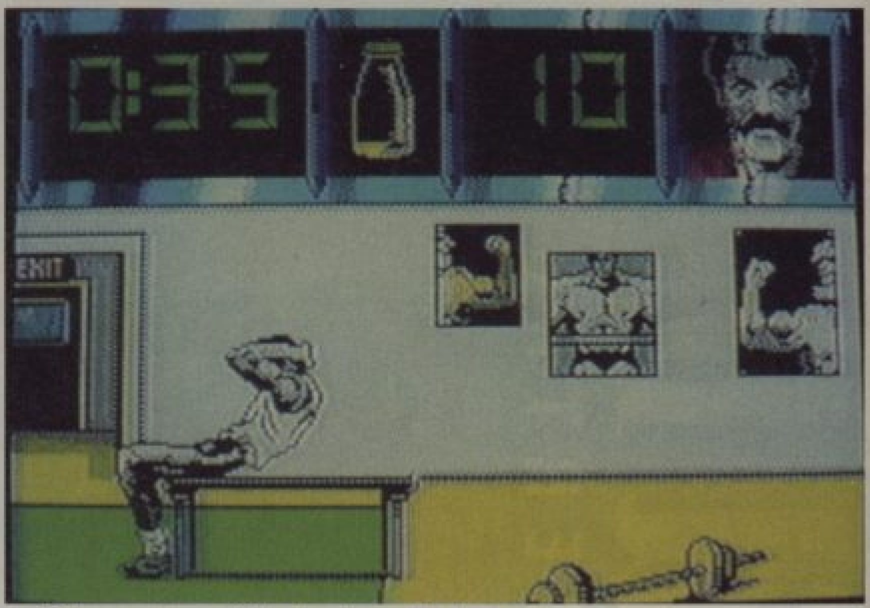
One of the really nice things about the game is the attention to detail. As you take part in the field events on the Commodore, the crowd in the background does the Mexican Wave. Not only that, but other contestants do press ups and train, while a pack of runners jogs around the outside track.

On the Speccy the training room scenes feature a little bod in the background who wanders around in a comic routine trying to pick up various weights, on the 64 Daley looks out the screen at us and sweats. There is no need for these – they are totally un-necessary to the game but they are a nice touch.

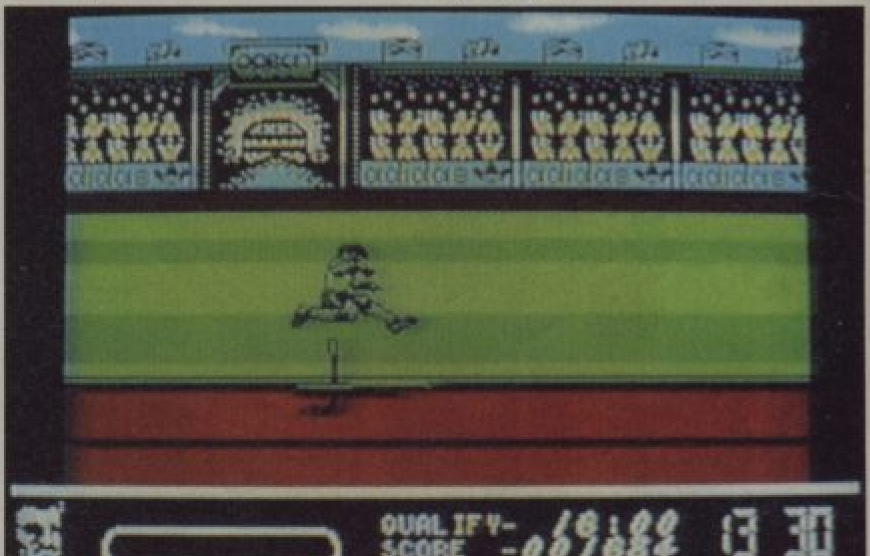
The system of play is this. To begin with we see Daley in the weights room, striving to achieve overall fitness. Though the Spectrum sprites are still only monochrome in these scenes they are of a fair size, and at least bear a reasonable resemblance to our hero. The idea here is to waggle your joystick back and forth at such



▲ *Amstrad training room: little guy does his comic routine.*



▲ *Daley strains to fill the bottle on the Spectrum.*



▲ *We're left in no doubt as to what sort of hurdling shoes Daley wears.*

HOMPSON HALLENGE

speed as to fill up each of three bottles of a well known fizzy glucose drink within a time limit, and so be in the ideal state of body for the two days' events. If you suceed you now have some reserves of energy to draw on when the going gets rough.

This over with, it is straight into the events, and there is more than enough frantic jiggling of the joystick here to keep even the most hardened basher with a smile on his face.

First up on the load (Day 1) is the hundred metres, ten seconds or so of frantic joystick action which only pales into significance next to the 400 metres and the *(oh my God)* 1500 metres in the second load.

Not a lot more to be said about the running events really. The motion is quite nice, the backgrounds are nice and detailed and (on the 64) moving, and your lower arms take a lot of punishment. One thing especially vital here is to make sure you chose the correct pair of Adidas training shoes from your menu for each event, or you'll really be making unnecessary work for yourself. There's no easy way to do this I'm afraid: on the versions I played, finding out which shoes to use is a case of trial and error. The packaging may make this clear.

Adidas also get mentioned on the posters that surround the stadium, though there are fewer of those than there are on, say, *Peter Beardsley's Football*. See what you can get if you cough up the dosh, Lucozade?

Next up is the Long Jump – pretty tricky in that you have to jiggle the stick to build up your power, release the fire button to get the jump, and then control the angle of the jump with your joystick to get a good length to it.

The three throwing events – Shot Putt, Discus and Javelin – are quite close to each other, each one relying on the build up of power – very difficult, on my first attempt at waggling my stick that fast I got roughly nowhere – before the vital angle selection and the release.

The hurdles make an interesting variant to the running events, and then it is on to the high jump and pole vault. Possibly the trickiest of the lot, the skill is in timing the jump to the last possible moment, especially hard in the vault since you must guess the length of the stick in front of you.

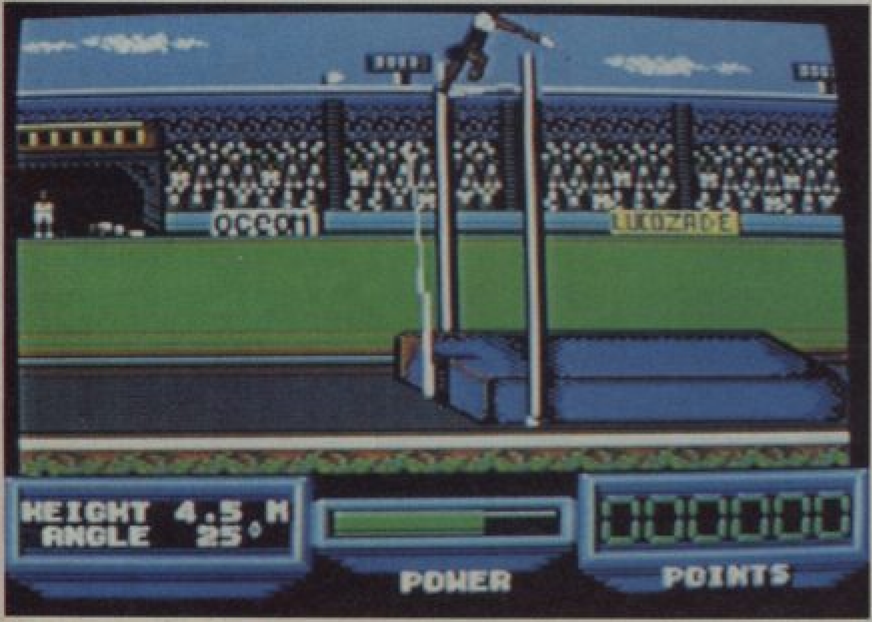
If you've done well you get to go on the winner's podium, something you well deserve; after all that wrist action building up power you'd be as tired as Daley himself.

All in all, a very good looking game that recreates both the man and his sport well. My only real reservation would be that the manic joystick use could become somewhat painful after a while.

Definitely one to pick up if you're into compilation sports simulations though I don't think it's special enough to earn the Golden Joystick its illustrious predecessor did. We've just seen too much of this sort of thing since then.



▲ *Discus on the 64: note runners in the background.*



▲ *A successful vault, but the pole's a bit bendy.*



▲ *ST screen: looking good.*

	C64	SPEC.
► GRAPHICS	8	7
► SOUND	7	6
► VALUE	8	6
► PLAYABILITY	7	6
► OVERALL	8	6

UPDATE . . .

We've seen loading screens and the start of work on the Amstrad version, and it should play very similarly to the Spectrum.


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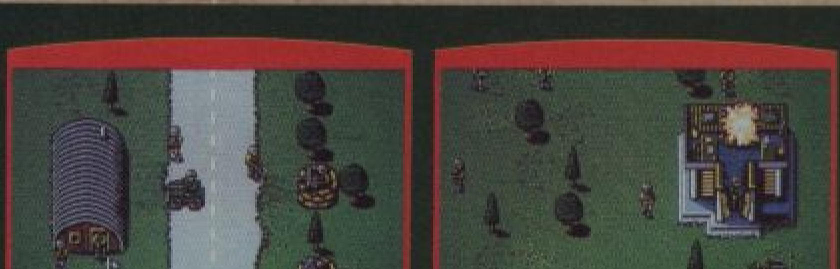


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Atari ST screen shots shown

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NETHERWORLD

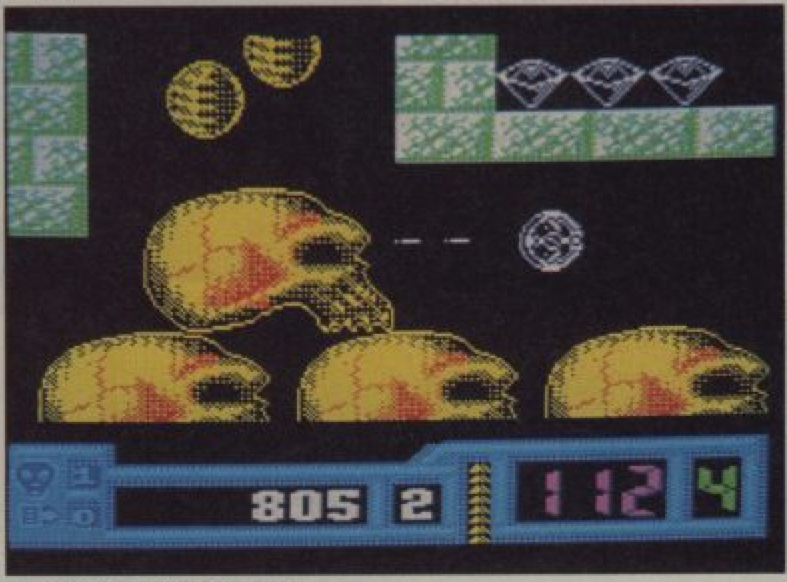
► SUPPLIER: HEWSON.
► MACHINES: CBM 64/128, SPECTRUM 48/128, AMSTRAD CPC, ATARI ST, AMIGA.
► PRICES: SPECTRUM CASS £7.99, DISK £12.99, CBM 64 CASS £9.99, DISK £14.99, ATARI ST £19.99, AMIGA £19.99.
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: GARY WHITTA.



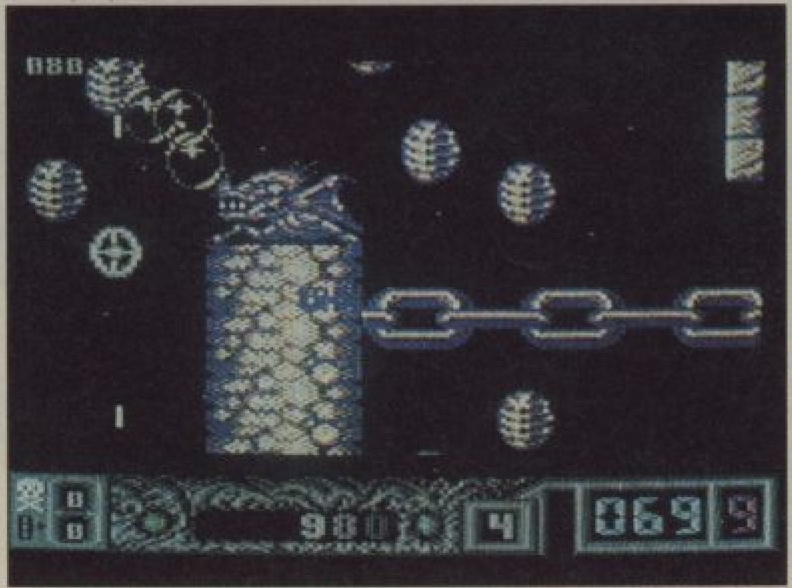
▲ *Shades of Jeff Minter on the ST version.*



▲ *Amstrad: Chunkier graphics but just as playable.*



▲ *Skulls on the Spectrum.*



▲ *Deadly Dragons on the 64.*

As if shoot 'em-up buffs didn't already have enough to be getting on with after the last release *Marauder*, Hewson has just released *Netherworld*, a strange mixture of shoot 'em up and arcade adventure.

The game has you trapped in a strange alien world inhabited by all manner of dangerous creatures. Obviously you want to get out of there ASAP, so you decide to try and collect enough of the planet's local currency to buy yourself out, a bit like how Prince Eddie got out of the Marines.

Diamonds are the local currency and you must collect a set amount by steering your wheel-like structure around the bubbly landscapes that form Netherworld.

The diamonds can be collected simply by running over them and picking them up. To hinder your progress, the creatures that make their home in Netherworld will do their best to get rid of you as fast as they can. Demons, for example, lie on the bubble platforms and spit their deadly poison at you. Alien generators look like weird beehives and blurt out different sub-nasties, while alien eggs are a pain in the bot, because they block off passageways and have to be blasted with your four-way laser to clear them.

In contrast, there are a few features in the *Netherworld* that can help you out, should you use them correctly. For instance, Diamond squeezers appear from time to time and can be used for changing rocks into diamonds by pushing them into the mouth of the diamond squeezer. In addition, metamorphosis walls will change a mine into four diamonds should one hit it.

There are hosts of features such as teleports, brick smashers, surprise bonuses and extra weapons.

You're in for a treat with *Netherworld*. It's just what you have come to expect from Hewson, with gorgeous animation on your ship and well-defined and animated nasties.

All in all, *Netherworld* is a great game and one that you should definitely think about splashing out on this month.

	64	ST
► GRAPHICS	8	8
► SOUND	8	8
► VALUE	7	6
► PLAYABILITY	8	8
► OVERALL	8	8

UPDATE . . .

The ST version of *Netherworld* is exactly the same in the way of playability as the C64.

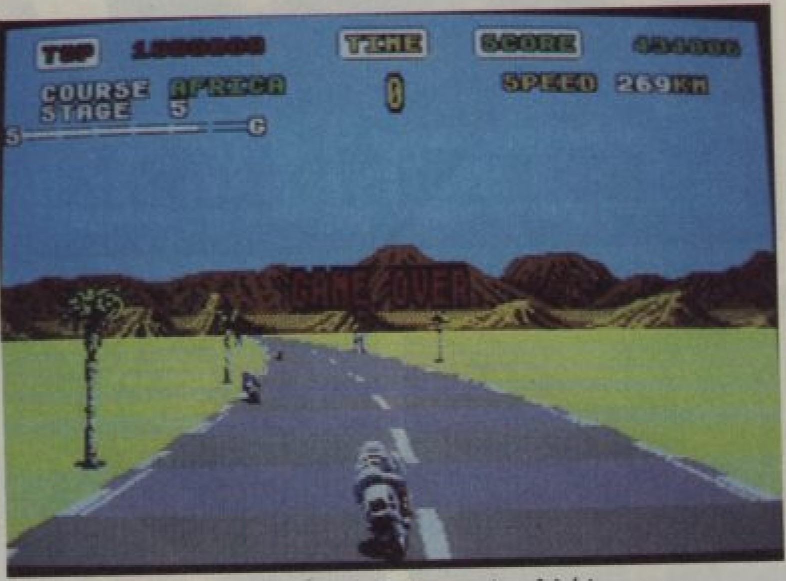
Reviews

SUPER HANG-ON

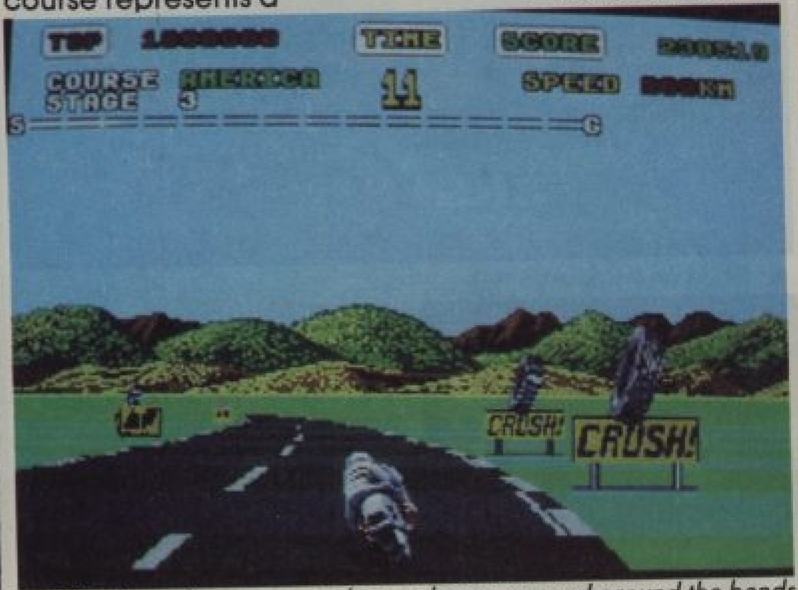
► MACHINES; SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/ COMMODORE 64/ATARI ST.
► SUPPLIER: ELECTRIC DREAMS.
► PRICE: SPEC/AMS/C64 £9.99 CASS, AMS/C64 £14.99 DISK, ATARI ST £19.99.
► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

After almost a year's delay, the Atari ST version of Sega's brilliant motorcycle racing racing coin-op has arrived. It's certainly been a long time coming, but I'm glad to say that the wait has definitely been worth it.

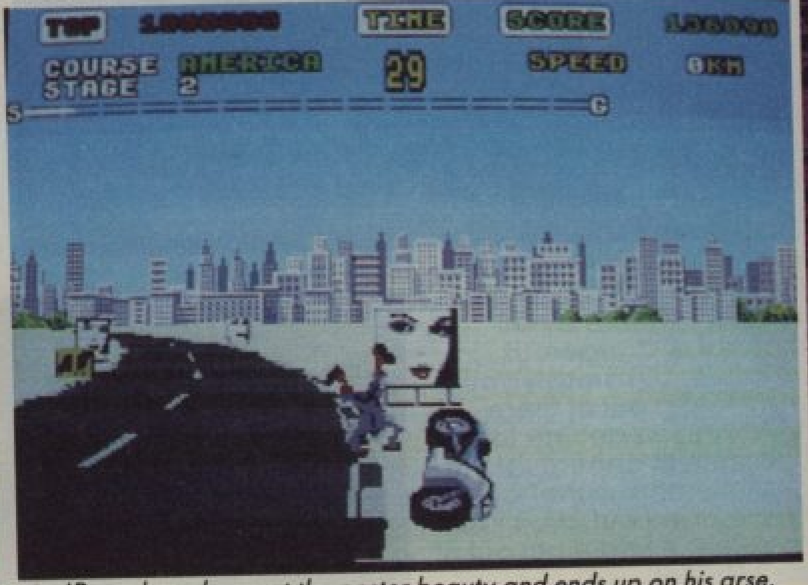
At the start of a race the player chooses one of three tracks: beginner, novice or expert. Each course represents a different part of the world, and respectively increase in length and difficulty.



▲ *Activision add a little 'vroom' to 16-bit racers.*



▲ *Watch you knee caps on the road as you speed around the bends.*



▲ *JR steals a glance at the poster beauty and ends up on his arse.*

At the start of a game, the player has the option to choose the control method, either mouse or joystick, and adjust the sensitivity. After that, a track is chosen, and the race begins.

Each course is split into several sections, and the objective is simply to race from one checkpoint to another within the time limit, whereupon extra time is added for the next part of the course.

The action is viewed from behind the bike as it zooms down the course, around tortuous bends and over hills. Unlike *Outrun*, the hills in *Super Hang-On* are thoroughly convincing. Another point I was pleased to note is that the programmers haven't opted for a stripy road – which usually looks awful – instead there's just the central road lines you'd find on any street circuit, and they work very well indeed.

The bike has a top speed of 280kmh. However, when this speed is reached, it's possible to kick in the nitro injector, which sends the bike screaming down the course at an incredible rate – which gives a tremendous feeling of exhilaration! The nitro injection should only be used on straight pieces of road though – switching it on just before you hit a corner is suicidal!

The course is packed with other riders, collision with which slow the bike right down. Crashing into a roadside obstacle sees the rider thrown into the air, and precious seconds are lost as he remounts.

When the finishing post is passed, any remaining seconds are converted into bonus points to give an overall score.

Super Hang-On is a superb conversion. Although the 3D update isn't super-smooth, it's very fast and doesn't detriment the gameplay or visual effect. The feeling of speed is tremendous, especially with the nitro injector or, and the bike handles extremely well – even with mouse control.

The difficulty level is nicely balanced so the game is both challenging and addicitive. The three different courses gives that extra lasting appeal, and it'll take a lot or racing before the checkered flag is passed on the expert track.

Super Hang-On just has the edge over Buggy Boy, and makes *Outrun* look completely pathetic. The feeling of speed and exhilaration it generates is incredible; combine that with superb playability, colourful backdrops and excellent sprites and you've got the best race game to date. Don't miss it.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

An excellent Spectrum version was released towards the end of last year. Other 8-bit versions are subject to delays, and there's no firm release date as we go to press.

BARBA

► **MACHINES: C64, SPEC.**
► **SUPPLIER: MELBOURNE HOUSE.**
► **PRICE: £7.95 CASS.**
► **VERSION TESTED: SPEC.**
► **REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.**

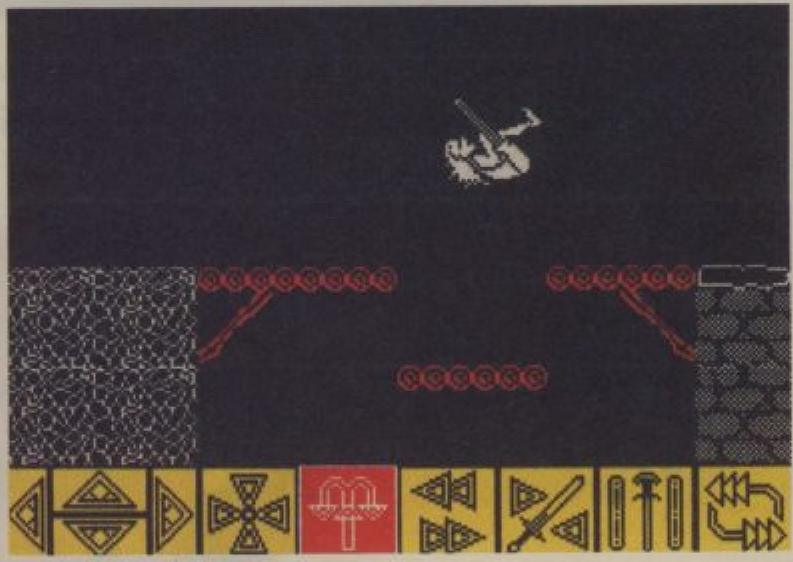
I don't know how they've done it, but they have. Melbourne House has managed to faithfully convert one of my all time favourite Amiga games to one of the most feeble computers around today. *Barbarian* is just so wicked, it makes Eugene Lacey look poor in comparison. *Barbarian* is just the slickest, bestest speccy arcade adventure ever, and that even rules out my old favourite, *Firelord*.

You are Hegor, the rootin', tootin', slashin', bashin', dinosaur-slaying Barbarian, who also claims to be the toughest son of a chicken ever, and you've been sent to take care of an evil wizard, who's done something bad I suppose and (yawn), I guess he's hiding somewhere down a dungeon with lots of levels and nasties. Oh, why should I carry on, you've heard it all before anyway . . .

So, off you trot, and before long you find yourself in a nice little field near the entrance to the dungeon, and this is where the game begins. As this first screen is completely void of any nasties and traps and things, now is a good time to hone your fighting skills. To perfect these, you have to get used to the icons at the bottom of the screen. Look at any convenient screen shot that happens to be near this review, and I'll talk you through the icons, left to right.

First, you've got a group of four arrows pointing in the four normal directions. These are the commands to make Hegor walk left or right, and climb up and down ladders or steps. Next to that, you've got what looks like a VC. This means stop all actions, oh please, oh for god's sake stop, no don't go there you'll die, etc. Next to that you've got a badly drawn umbrella, which makes you somersault – useful for getting over collapsing bridges. Then you have the icon that looks like the rewind button on your video. This makes you run in the direction you're facing. Next to that, there's a picture of a sword. This means use the item you have in your hand. Then you've got another piccy of a sword, which means, curiously enough, do a backward somersault. Finally, you've got the two arrows that are circling each other, this means drop everything and run away. This is not advisable because you drop everything and lose your weapon as well.

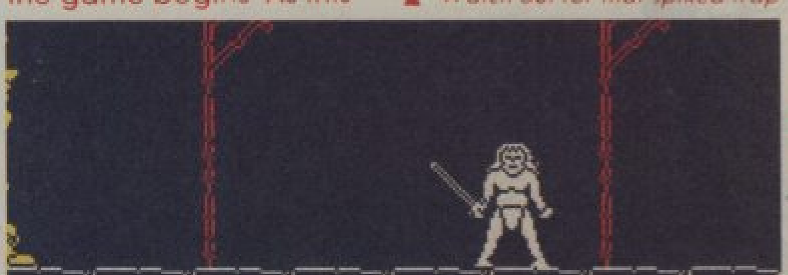
Right, that's the confusing bit over with. The rest of the game is a regular hack and slash adventure through quite a large map. On various screens, traps will appear out of the blue and try and kill you. One nasty trap is the old 'collapsing bridge' trick. Then you've got the 'large door with spikes falling from the ceiling' jape. As well as traps, there are lots of different types of nasties, just waiting to eat you, or put their head up your bum – whichever is more painful.



▲ *Jump that bridge!*



▲ *Watch out for that spiked trap*



▲ *Our hero, ready for anything.*

Just like the Yellow Pages, not all the things in the game are nasty. There are some good things, as well, like blocked drains, broken windows and extra weapons. You can find a bow and a very limited amount of arrows in place on the map, and these are used to kill baddies at long range, as there are some that you just can't get to. Also a shield lies hidden somewhere, and it's with this that you kill the Wizard, but I'm not telling you how.

The graphics have come down very nicely, and do bear quite a bit of resemblance to the original, though some of the animation is decidedly dodgy.

Thankfully, MH hasn't tried to get the sound onto the humble black box.



ARIAN

Instead they've come up with some wonderful 128K effects, making good use of echoes (doop-e-doop-e-doop-ee-doo-eee-doo). See what I mean? 48K sound, however, is just a matter of bleep, blip and blop, but this doesn't detract from the game too much.

Controls are far better than on the original, with up/down on the stick cycling through the icons, left/right manually moving the man on the screen, and fire selecting the currently highlighted option.

Barbarian is fabbo, terrific, great, good and OK all rolled into one. It's as good a conversion as possible and I wouldn't hesitate in thoroughly recommending it to any Speccy owners, if there still are any.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	7



▼ *Coming down the easy way.*

UPDATE . . .

The only other version around is the C64 version, which is surprisingly close to the Amiga version, both in feel and graphics. MH has, maybe unwisely, gone back to the pointer control used in 16-bit formats, so playwise it's different from the Speccy one, though for better or worse, I can't say.



TYPHOON

▲ MACHINES: C64 AND SPECTRUM.
▲ SUPPLIER: OCEAN.
▲ VERSION TESTED: C64.
▲ PRICE: £8.95 CASS, £12.95 DISK.
▲ REVIEWER: MARK PATTERSON.

Typhoon is one of those little known arcade conversions Ocean tends to spring on the unsuspecting public, not in a blaze of publicity but rather overshadowed by the major licences.

Frankly, before now, I had never even heard of *Typhoon* the conversion, let alone the arcade machine. I like *Afterburner* and *Flying Shark*, and *Typhoon* is a mixture of both of them. Before you start getting hot flushes over the thought of an early version of *Afterburner*, it seems only fair to warn you that in the first stage you move left and the plane banks right and you're also driving straight for a battleship launching a flurry of air to battleship torpedoes from your seemingly limitless supply.

A few direct hits put paid to the incredibly bad marksmanship of the battleship's gunners. On the tape version that I was using, the time involved between the end of the first level and the second level proved sufficiently long for me to hammer my mate Tony Dillon five nil on Sega soccer, have a breather and wipe the sweat from the 64's joystick. The computer took me completely by surprise by giving me a mere three seconds to gather my wits before starting the second stage.

For some completely inane reason, which escapes my super-enlarged intelligence, your super sleek, mega-death, F-14 paddywacker had metamorphosed itself into a humble green helicopter, churning out torpedoes like they were going out of fashion. I did the decent thing, and was hammered by the first wave of jets to enter the screen. I proceeded to blast and maim (well fluke and jam) my way up the level until a very large and unpleasant battleship realised what I was doing and launched a salvo of eight homing missiles, globules of whatever battleships glob, and a number of jet fighters. Thirty seconds and five men later it finally sunk into me that trying to pick off every gun turret, missile and plane was pointless, but by then I had to use the very handy restart feature I used all my reserves of raw skill and bypassed the battleship straight into a squadron of hunter-killer submarines.

The music is fantastically catchy, leaving half the office running round humming it. Graphically the first stage is the best, the perspective used on the attacking enemy fighters is good and fast with it.

Typhoon is a respectable game though not really anything special.

▲ GRAPHICS	7
▲ SOUND	9
▲ VALUE	7
▲ PLAYABILITY	7
▲ OVERALL	7

UPDATE . . .

Typhoon should be available on the 64, Amstrad and Spectrum by the time you read this. However, Ocean have no plans for any sixteen bit versions.



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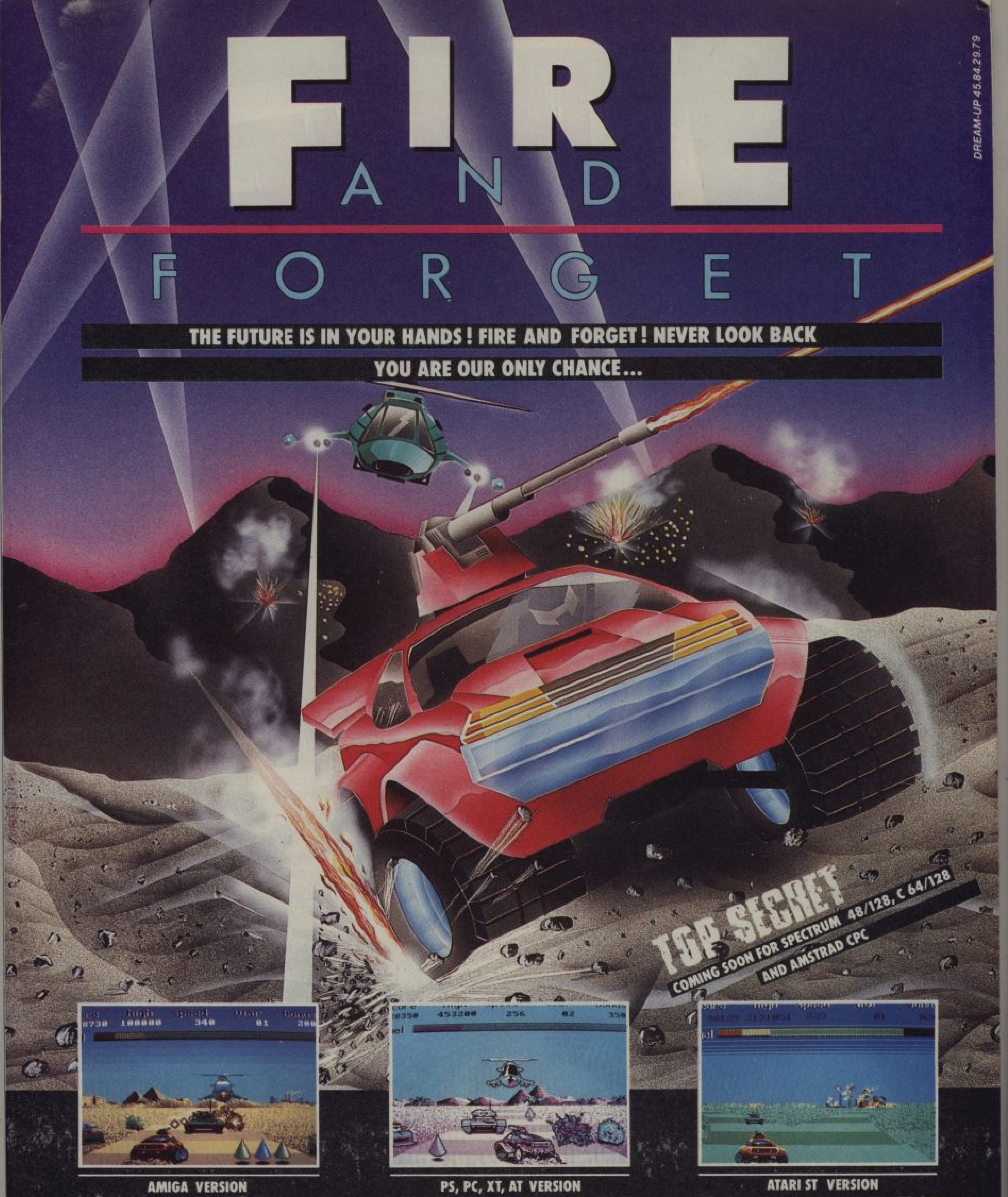
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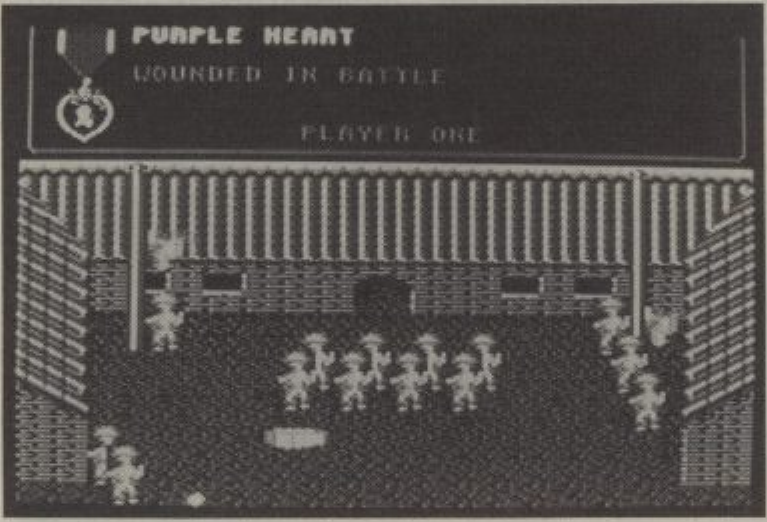
► MACHINES: C64, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD CPC 464.
► SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT.
► PRICE: AMIGA AND ST £24.99/C64 CASS £9.99 DISK £12.99/SPECTRUM AND AMSTRAD CASS £9.99 DISK £14.99.
► VERSIONS TESTED: C64/ST.
► REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

Fernandez Must Die is, apart from being a very bad title for a game, a mix of *Ikari Warriors* and *Into The Eagles Nest.* It's also brilliant. It boots *Ikari* in the goolies and turns the *Eagle* into a budgie, so to speak, leaving you with a two-player trek through lots of scrolling screens of action-packed battleground, with a bit of building exploration thrown in.

The Fernandez in questions is in fact an evil dictator who has set up eight bases, the purpose of each to defend one of the 8 strips of land he has taken over. He has captured all of the allied soldiers and the gold and hidden them inside the buildings that join the eight strips. Your mission is to seek and destroy these bases, whilst recovering the 202 caches of gold and the 182 POW's. Sounds like quite a job. Luckily you don't have to do it alone.

The game is arranged as a huge map, broken up into eight vertical strips, each several screens long and joined by rooms with closed doors that you have to blast your way into. You and a friend race headlong up and down the vertically scrolling areas, searching for the huge L-shaped buildings, the bases, and avoiding everything the enemy can throw at you, and believe me, that's quite a lot.

Firstly, you've got your definative enemy soldiers. These run on from the top or the bottom of the screen and to chase you in and around the buildings, firing all the while.



▲ *Looks like you didn't make it.*

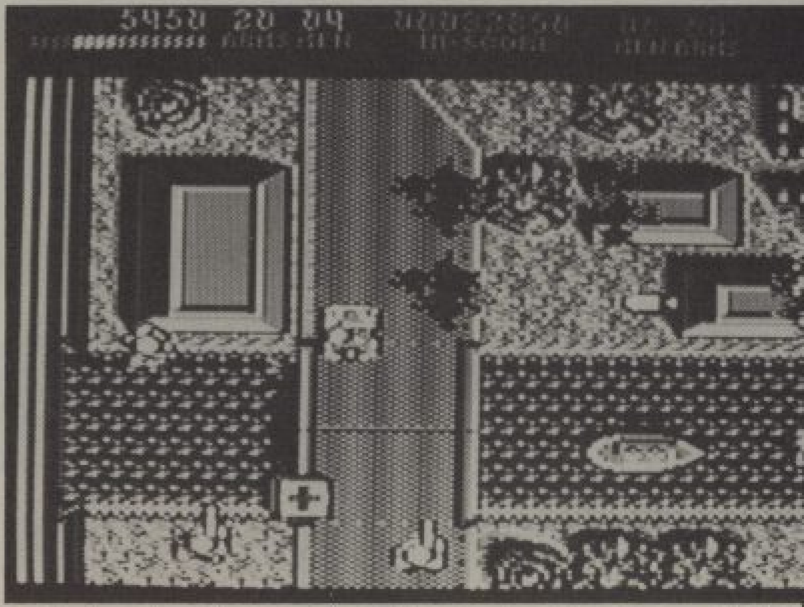
The enemy plane either drops more soldiers, medical supplies with which you can boost your flagging energy or bombs, which churn up the ground, killing anything they touch, including you. Then you've got the tanks, Three times your sprite, these hunter-killers mill about, firing huge shells in your direction.

Doing the same job as the tank in Ikari, the jeep lets you get around at around three times the normal speed.

Unfortunately, only one hit from a cannon, or two mines is all that's needed to turn your nimble little land rover into a heap of twisted metal. One nice point here is that, rather than have two jeeps running around at once, both people can get in the same jeep, with the person who entered first doing the driving. What a cute idea.

When you enter one of the side rooms, by way of blasting a hole in the door, the game goes into mode Eagles Nest. Using a plan view of the area you are in, you can see the POW's, shacked up in little cages embedded in the walls, and the caches of gold laying around on the floor, just waiting to be walked over.

Graphics are great, with a very simple but effective colour system. Some very nice backdrops and extensive amounts of detail (such as the way when you grenade something, you make a nice hole in the floor, which stays there for the rest of the game) show that the programmers (Tony Crowther and David Bishop, no less) have really taken there time over this. I especially like the little ceremony at the end, where you are shown your CO placing medals on your coffin. You earn different medals for different things like the Purple Heart for wounds in battle or the Distinguished Service Cross for destroying vehicles.



▲ *The boats bombing you, the soldiers are shooting at you, get in that jeep and get the hell outta there!*

Sound is simple but effective, with some great tunes and a particularly nice explosion sound effect.

FMD isn't a game that you can just pick up a joystick and play but it's not an impossible task, either. In the two days I had it, I played it a lot, and came very close to completing it (6 bases to be exact), so I can't see it lasting very long, though there is the added challenge of rescuing all the POW's. A great game and well worth spending your money on.

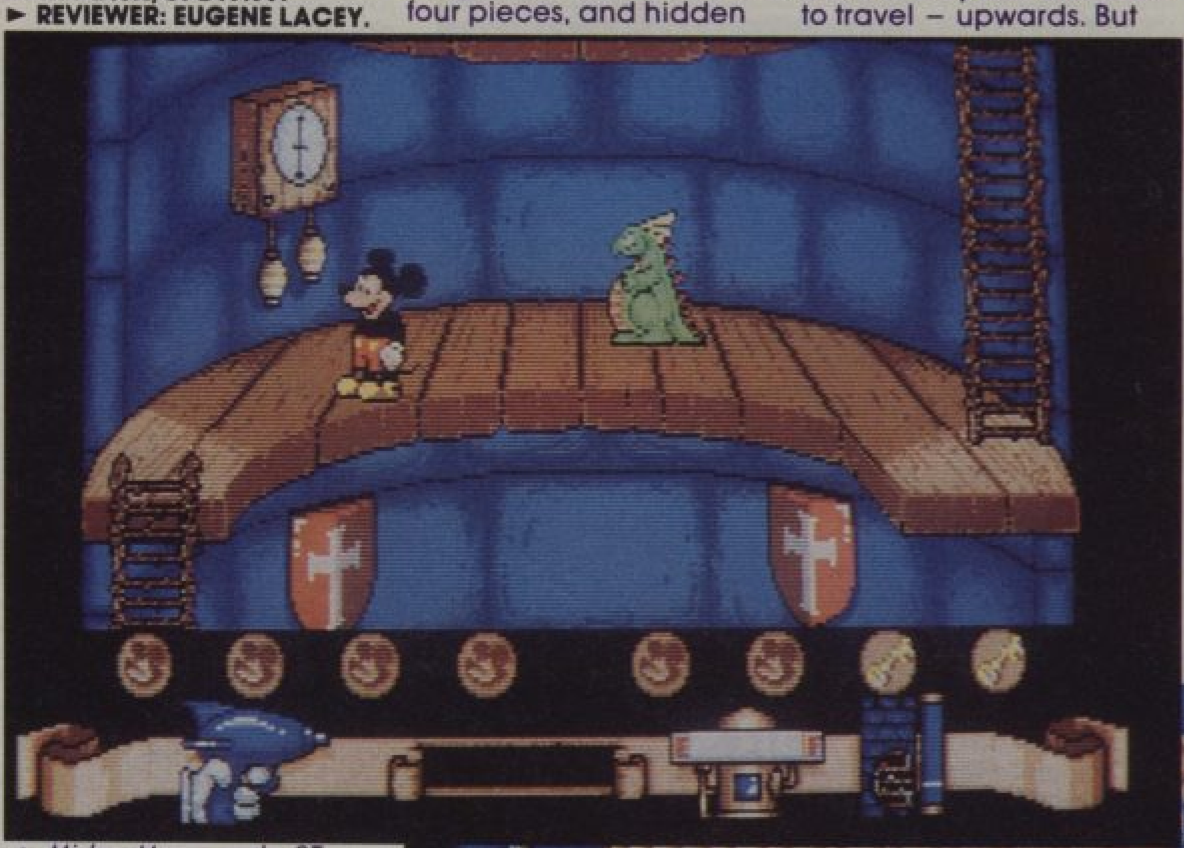
► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

ST and Amiga versions will be launched in September followed by the C64 version in early October. Bad news for Speccy and Amstrad owners though - their versions are not expected to be ready until the end of October.

MICKEY

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM, 64, AMSTRAD, ST.
► SUPPLIER: GREMLIN.
► PRICES: SPECTRUM £7.99, +3 £12.99, AMSTRAD £9.99 £14.99 DISK, ST £19.99.
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.



▲ Mickey Mouse on the ST.

Not one to boast or drop names or anything but I have actually been to Disneyland – the original California based one – and have spent considerable time in deep conversation with Mickey Mouse about his new computer game.

So when I tell you that Disneyland is the most fun you can have on this planet I am talking from personal experience – not spouting from a travel brochure.

Because Disneyland is so mega-brill Mickey and I thought you would like the chance to mosey round for yourself. You can too, should you be one of two lucky winners to land the top prize in the Gremlin/ C+VG Disneyland Competition.

Before I tell you about that though – let me describe the game. The Magic Kingdom is in mortal peril. One of those evil so and so's that seem to cause so much hassle in computer games has made off with Merlin's Magic wand, broken it into four pieces, and hidden them throughout the Disney Castle.

Your enemy is the Evil Ogre King who has posted his monsters and a wicked witch in each of the four towers of the castle. Mickey must defeat all of these nasties to restore the wand and save Disneyland.

Each tower is made up of several circular platforms linked by wooden ladders. There is only one direction to travel – upwards. But Mickey must defeat the ghoulish guardians in each tower to proceed.

Armed with a water pistol with a limited supply of water our hero must be accurate in his aim if he is to succeed. If the liquid connects with a target it will turn into a bonus. Many of these are little blue bottles of water to restore Mickey's water pistol level.

Other bonuses to be picked up are 'keys' which enable Mickey to get through the heavy wooden doors into the sub games – where certain items are located that he will need in the quest.

A birds head is another useful item to acquire as it will enable Mickey to survive, should he fall off one of the platforms. Glue sticks monsters to the spot, lightning bolts make Mickey move faster. A 'Repulsiveness' power-up makes Mickey so disgusting that not even the Ogre King's ghouls want to have anything to do with him, bombs blow up anything nasty on screen at the moment when they are picked up and shields protect our heroes water supply.

The water pistol will not dispatch all of the monsters so Mickey sometimes has



▲ Mickey searches the maze in this ST version sub-game.

MOUSE

to press the space bar to wield his mallet.

The graphics are superb in all versions of Mickey – full of detail and extremely well animated. One of the best bits is when Mickey swings his mallet at an Ogre – causing it to mutate into two tiny Ogres who scurry around the tower and are difficult to finish off.

When Mickey gets to the top of the fourth tower the Ogre King knows that he is going to have to fight it out with the super rodent in in person.

To destroy the ugly, web-winged, huge-jawed nasty – Mickey must score fifteen direct hits with his water pistol. Only three attempts are allowed per go and should he fail its right back to the foot of the first tower.

Things are more difficult than this for ST and Amiga owners as they have to defeat a wicked witch at the top of each individual tower before going on to meet the Ogre King. Whichever version you play one piece of the stolen wand is to be found at the top of each tower – and Mickey must have the wand complete before he faces the Ogre King.

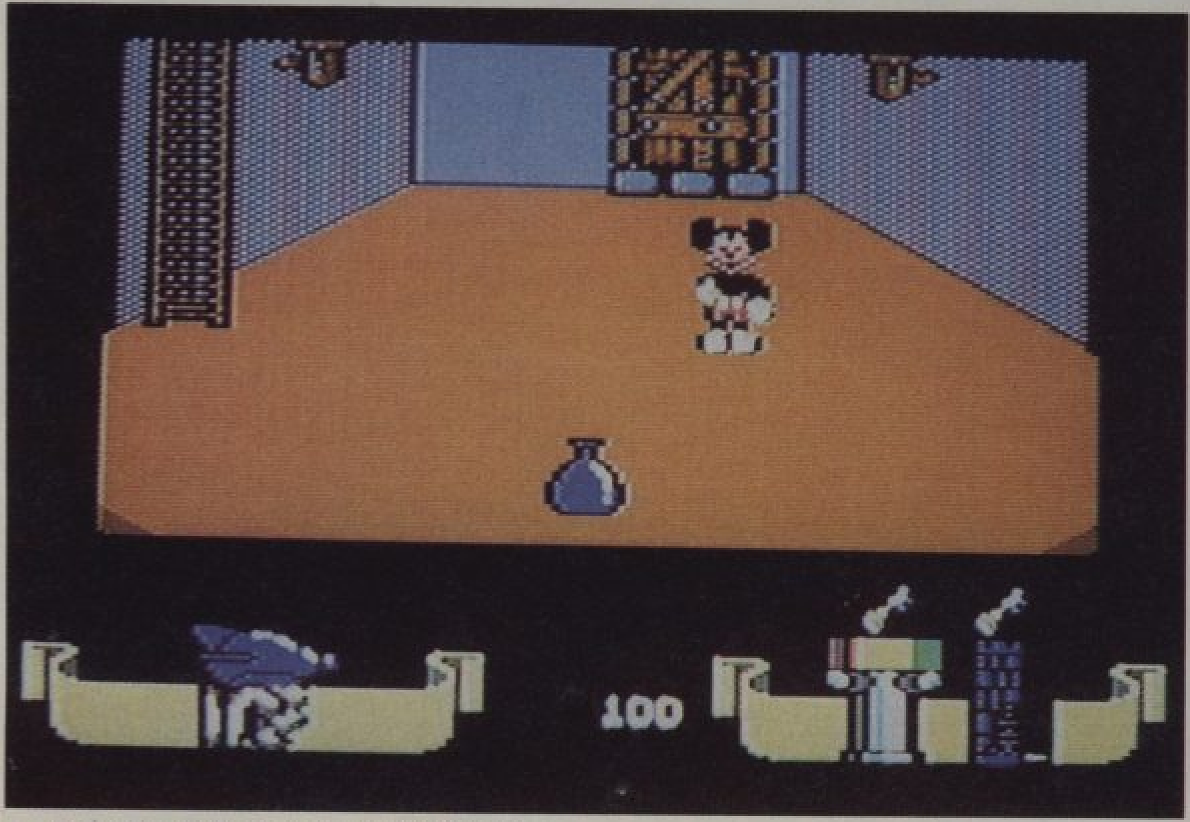
At first glance Mickey looks like a game for children. This impression is created by the pretty graphics and the character of Mickey himself – who is seen as a kids hero. When you get down to trying to solve the game though, you soon realise that there is nothing sprog-like about the game design. Believe me, it is no pushover. It requires good arcade skills, persistance, and patience.

The sub games provide welcome light relief from the main business of saving the Magic Kingdom from the Ogre. Mickey reaches these through the back doors of the tower. In the first two towers he comes up against the Puddle Maze which he has to explore – picking up the magical items as he travels and lobbing his trusty mallet at the monsters.

The Bubble Machine is my favourite sub game. It places Mickey on a moving platform which he must bash holes in so that he can puncture the giant bubbles emanating from a leaky pipe. Ghouls fly across screen attempting to deplete our hero's energy as he struggles against the giant bubbles.

In towers three and four he comes up against the Dripping Taps that have to be switched off in the right order to proceed. In the Pump Room several little monsters are causing havoc by pulling the corks out of the leaking pipe. Mickey must get past the force field and take his mallet to the giant monster who is orchestrating the mischievous work of his little monster minions.

Disney are known for being real sticklers when it comes to the representation of their characters in other media. I can't think that there will be any complaints from across the pond about this one. Gremlin have made a first class job of turning Mickey into good looking and fun to play computer game.



▲ *Mickey heads for the water in this 64 screen.*

	64	ST
► GRAPHICS	7	9
► SOUND	6	7
► VALUE	7	6
► PLAYABILITY	6	7
► OVERALL	7	8

UPDATE . . .

Speccy, 64, Amstrad, and ST versions are all now on sale. An Amiga version of Mickey will be out at the end of the month at £19.99. Gremlin have the rights to other Disney characters. Already in the works is a game called Disney Olympics – involving several characters.

COMPETITION



▲ *Win a trip to Disneyland.*

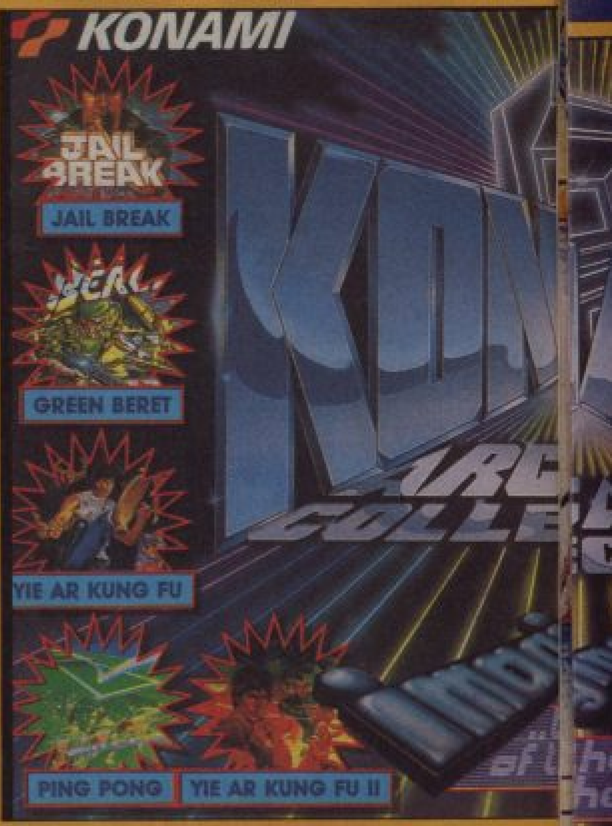
If you are a Disney fan and have always fancied going to the Magic Kingdom – can there be anyone alive who doesn't fancy four days in Disneyland? Here is how to win a trip of a lifetime. Gremlin and C+VG have got together to offer a truly mega prize.

The top prize will include seven nights hotel accommodation in the Holiday Inn, outward and return flights between Gatwick and Orlando and admission to and unlimited use of all the famous Disneyland attractions. The two lucky winners will be accompanied by a representative from C+VG (our new Dep Ed, Julian Rignall. There will be two age categories – fourteen and under and fifteen and over.

To enter the competition you must purchase a copy of the game. The official entry form is enclosed with the cassette. No photocopies or hand written entries will be accepted and the Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to this competition.

ENLIST FOR HI-S







EVERY GAME A SMASH HIT!

WIZBALL A superlative piece of software. Slick in virtually every aspect, wholly original and immensely playable. (Zzap) **ZZAP SIZZLER AMS ACTION – MASTERGAME SINCLAIR USER – CLASSIC CRASH SMASH.**

SHORT CIRCUIT The two games are excellent and have delightful graphics. The variety is the real clincher, with something for everyone. (Amstrad Action).

ARKANOID This is a magnificent conversion, faithfully capturing the feel, atmosphere, look and sound of the Taito original. (Zzap) **PCW HALL OF FAME/YOUR SINCLAIR – MEGA GAME SINCLAIR USER – CLASSIC.**

HEAD OVER HEELS Is one of the most addictive, playable, cuddly, cute and fun games ever. Miss it at your peril. (Crash) **CRASH SMASH AMS ACTION – MASTERGAME ZZAP SIZZLER.**

THE GREAT ESCAPE "THE BEST ARCADE ADVENTURE" 1986 NEWSFIELD READERS AWARD Unquestionably the best arcade adventure so far this year – don't miss it. (Zzap) **YOUR SINCLAIR – MEGA GAME**

COBRA Go out and buy it now, no self-respecting games player should be without a copy. The graphics are superb and the scrolling is very effective. (Crash) **CRASH SMASH**

FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD This is a highly innovative arcade/adventure that you must not be without (Crash) **CRASH SMASH**

FREE YIE AR KUNG FU NEWSFIELD "BEST GAME" AWARD. Easily the best of the martial arts programs because of the variety of characters and excellent arcade style playability. (Crash) **CRASH SMASH**



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JAIL BREAK It's every prison warden's nightmare – the inmates have broken out. These men are hardened criminals, armed to the hilt and aren't afraid to gun you all down. Just move in, knock 'em down and round 'em up. Easy!

GREEN BERET RESCUE THE CAPTIVES! You are a highly trained combat machine. Your mission: infiltrate all four enemy Strategic Defence installations – alone, against immeasurable odds.

YIE AR KUNG FU II Eight more deadly opponents to combat as you advance to become a black-belt master. Authentic fighting moves with 4 different locations.

SHAO-LIN'S ROAD Our hero has finally mastered the secret martial art "CHIN'S SHAO-LIN" but is trapped by triad gangs. With kicks and other secret powers, escape from and travel SHAO-LIN'S road to freedom!

NEMESIS The planet Nemesis, is now under an all-out space attack beings from the sub-space star cluster of Bacterion. You will need all your courage and concentration to win. Get ready to blast off!

HYPER SPORTS Continuing the challenge where "TRACK and FIELD" left off. Archery, Skeet Shooting and Weight Lifting are just some of the featured events to test your skill and stamina.

PING PONG You can almost feel the tension of the big match breaking through the screen ... the expectant crowd is almost on top of you! You return the service with a Top-spin Backhand, then a Forehand Back-spin, the ball bounces high, from your opponent's looping, defensive lob ... SMASH! ... a great shot opens the score ...

JACKAL Get into this and you'll never get out ... The plan – codename JACKAL – is to drop a squad of 4 crack troops behind enemy lines. Rescue a group of prisoners and whilst under attack, deliver them to helipads. Their final objective is to knockout enemy headquarters. Simple eh?

YIE AR KUNG FU Become a grand-master but to achieve this you must defeat a variety of deadly opponents, armed with different skills and weapons and must be overcome with a combination of 6 different attack moves.

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ALL THESE CHART TOPPING HITS IN A SINGLE GIANT PACK

RENEGADE In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think – but look sharp – there is always time to die! You will encounter the disciples of evil whose mission is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the gauntlet in their path – the Renegade. PLAY RENEGADE ... PLAY MEAN!

IK+ They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User). And who are we to argue? But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD.

SUPER SPRINT Licensed from Atari Games' original money-spinning coin-op, one or two players compete head-to-head over eight gruelling tracks and four levels of game difficulty. Avoid the hazards and collect golden spanners to enhance custom car features – the key to Super Sprint. With detailed animation and sound effects, Super Sprint brings the best driving excitement ever to be experienced on home computers.

RAMPAGE The game where the nice guys don't get a look in. Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco. Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.

BARBARIAN THE STORY SO FAR ... The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak an unspeakable doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him. However, he has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released. From the wastelands of the North, comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...

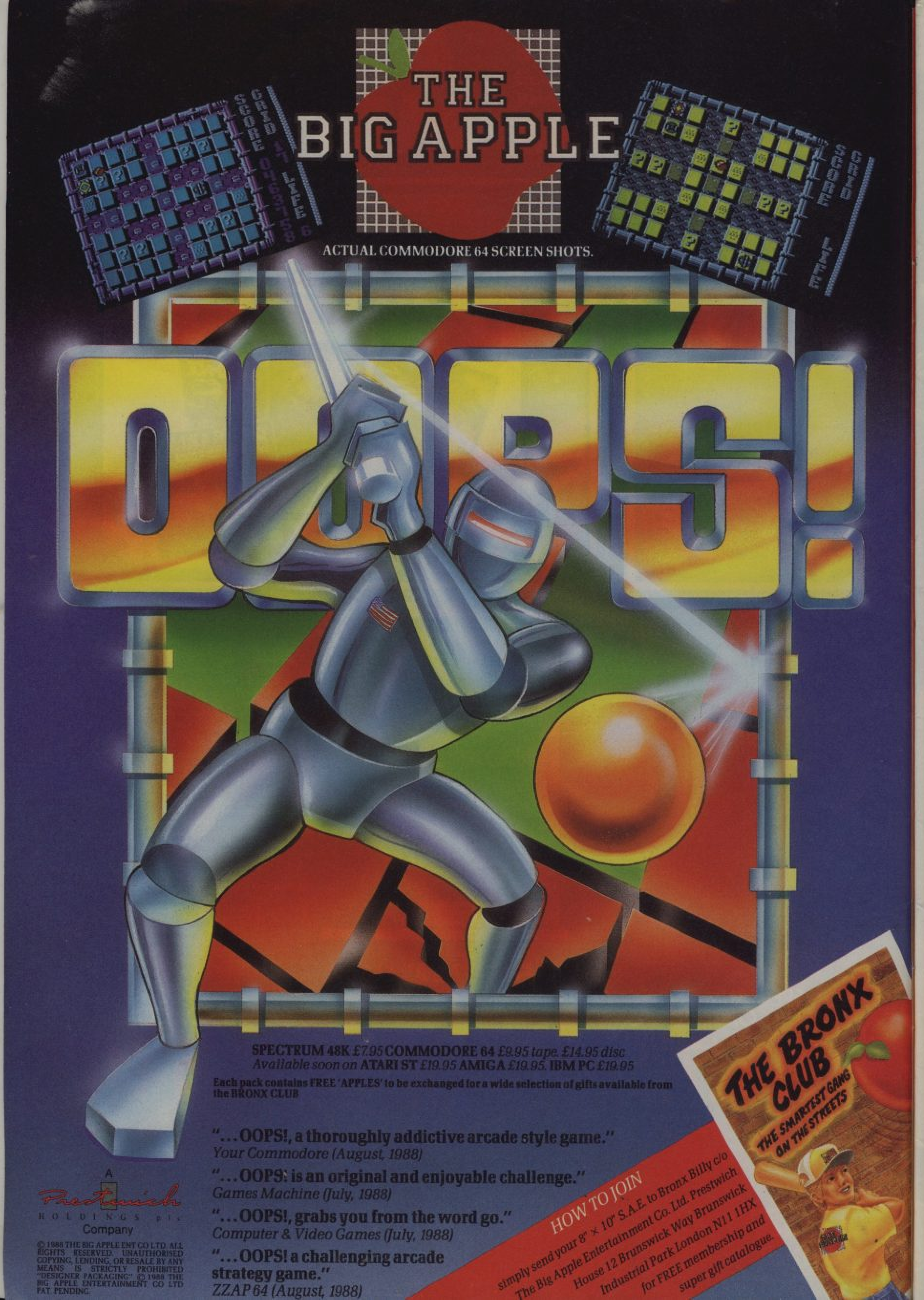
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DIAMOND

► **MACHINES: SPECTRUM 48/128/CBM 64/128.**
► **SUPPLIER: DESTINY.**
► **PRICES: £7.99 SPECTRUM 48/128, £8.99 CBM 64/128 CASS, £12.99 DISK.**
► **VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM 48/128.**
► **REVIEWER: GARY WHITTA.**

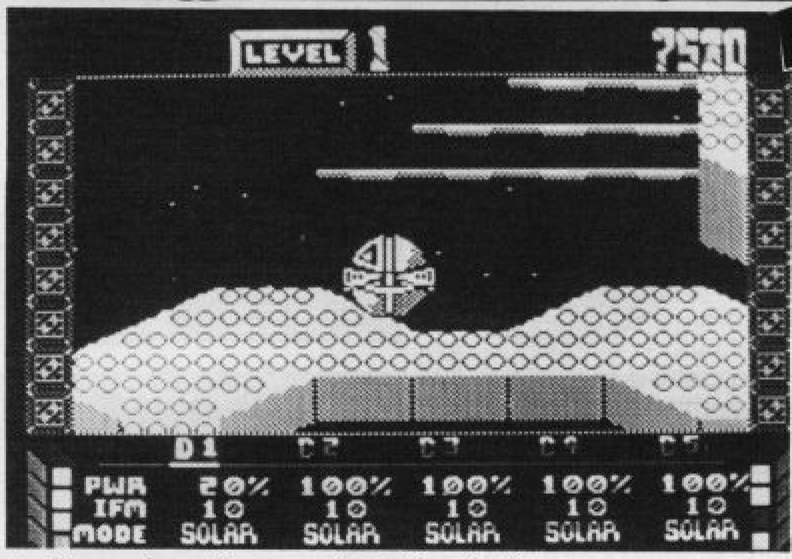
Activision's first release on its new sub-label, Destiny, sees you in command of a strange robot-like being by the name of Supertronic, whose job it is to secure a huge prison spaceship which has recently malfunctioned, thus letting all the prisoners escape. The Supertronic is a weird shaped device, resembling a flying metallic Melon. The Supertronic glides around the scrolling prison ship landscape with the intent of stealing all the the exit hatches to stop as many prisoners as possible from escaping.

In order to do this, the Supertronic is equipped with a nifty little device which allows it to transmutate into any of four different control modes:

Hillbar Mode :In this mode, the Supertronic retracts all its outboard systems in order to protect itself from attack and collision. The problem with Hibar Mode is that as this mode uses up zero power, you have no control over the Supertronic at all, so you are forced to drift around helplessly until you choose another mode.

Solar Mode : By hitting the S key you are transformed into Solar Mode, allowing you to replenish your ship's energy supplies by sucking in the energy from the solar pannels that are scattered around the ship. As Solar energy replenishment is a time consuming process, it's possible to get another one of your five Supertronics into action while the other one re-energises.

Killar Mode :As the name would sugest, this one is the most fun! Killar Mode activates the Supertronic's onboard weapons system, thereby allowing you to eliminate anything that stands between you and mission completion.

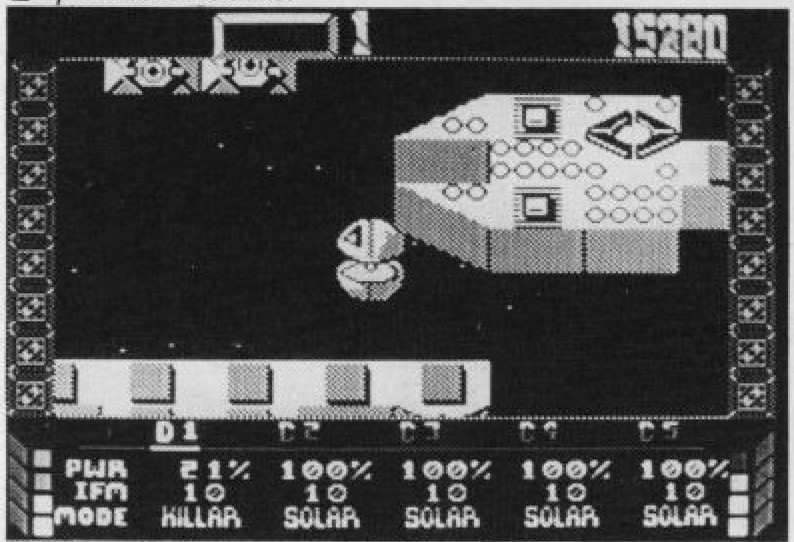


▲ *Diamonds are forever – but naff on the Speccy.*

Rovar Mode: No, you don't turn into a dog, although you do work like one. In this mode you glide about the ship looking for unsealed exits, from where the prisoners escape. To seal it you simply stop over it. Although you do have access to use your weapons systems in this mode, unlike Killar Mode, you cannot use your inertia-field modules, which is just a fancy word for limited invincibility. By sealing all the exits on a prison ship, the ship is pronounced secure once more and you pass onto the next level.



▲ *Sparklers fail to shine.*



▲ *Diamond – "not enough action".*

Other Supertronic modes available allow you to transfer power from one Supertronic to another, and use two Supertronics together to help each other out of tight corners and traps.

Diamond sounds from this review like a pretty deep and absorbing game, but it isn't. It doesn't really break any barriers as far as Speccy games are concerned, and the gameplay is too diluted to offer any long term challenge, which is a shame as the game's graphics and sound aren't half bad, with some nifty scrolling routines and excellent use of colour. There's also a free cassette single featuring up-and-coming band *The Company She Keeps* but I can't comment on this as I haven't been able to listen to it (Julian won't let me borrow his Walkman).

So there we have it. Not *too* bad as Spectrum games go, quite involving the first couple of goes, but not enough action to hold you for long, especially not for the price.

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	4
► PLAYABILITY	4
► OVERALL	4

UPDATE . . .

The Spectrum version is now on sale. The C64 version will hit the shops towards the end of August. No other versions of Diamond are planned.

ULTIM

► MACHINES: PC/64.
► SUPPLIER: ORIGIN.
► PRICE: C64 £24.99 DISK ONLY. AMIGA & ST £29.95.
► VERSION TESTED: PC.
► REVIEWER: WAYNE.

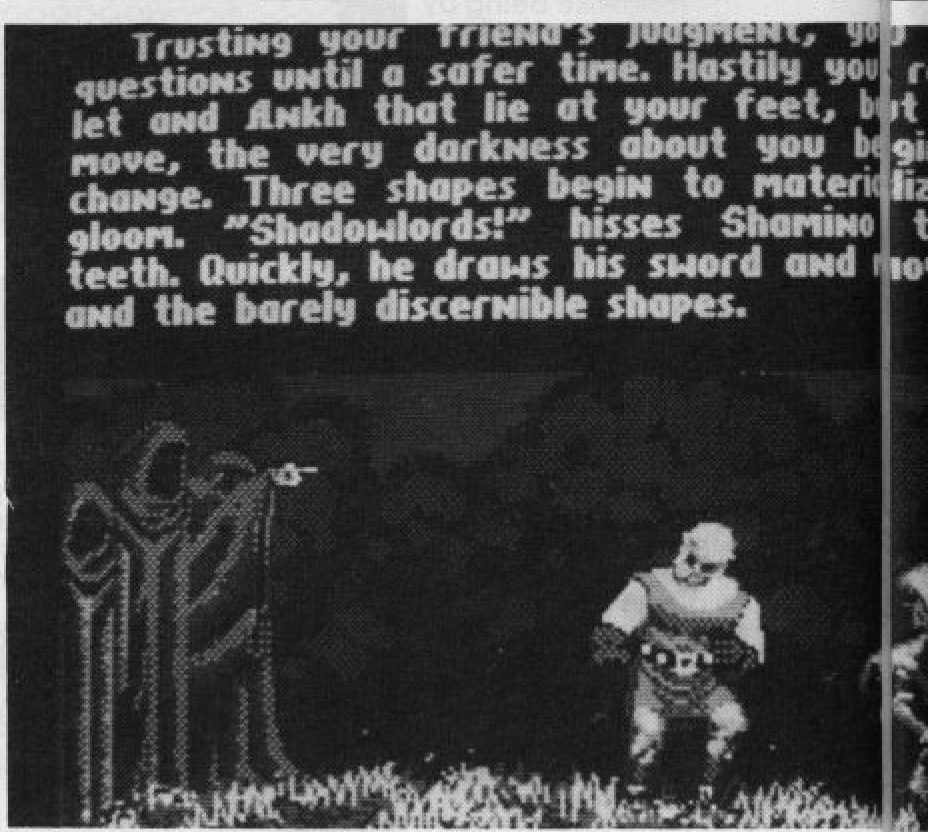
The *Ultima* series of the most successful sagas in the history of computer gaming. All five tales are based around the mysterious "Lord British", who is the firm but benevolent ruler of the mythical land called Brittania.

British tries to keep his kingdom free, but behind every corner lurks an evil usurper who is only too willing to take over British's throne.

It all started with *Ultima I*, when the evil Wizard Mondain tried to slowly subvert the Lords of the land against British. *Ultima II* challenged to conquer evil and lead the nation into a period of golden prosperity, whilst in *Ultima III* the evil hoards had once again reformed, and you had to go in search of the elusive Exodus to quell them. *Ultima IV* saw you put the world to rights for British once again.

So when you feel the tingling feeling of teleportation happening you know that Lord British needs you. And this time in *Ultima V*, he needs you more than ever!!

When you arrive in Brittania, your long time friend and adventurer Iolo, quickly informs you that Lord British is missing!! However, before he can explain in further detail, three dark, malevolent evil beings turn up and shoot Iolo with a magical arrow, which all but kills him. Releasing that you are in mortal danger, you quickly make your retreat into the night.



▲ *The Shadowlords materialise from the mists.*

Making haste you reach Shamino's house, another old adventurer friend of yours, where you manage to get Iolo patched up. It is here that you learn that British has been lost, presumed dead, on an expedition to explore the newly discovered underworld. Lord Blackthorn, British's trusted and respected friend, has assumed control.

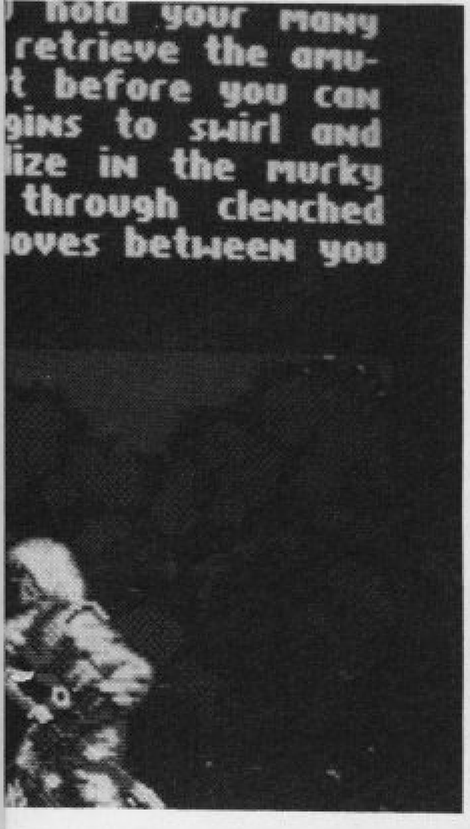
Tyranny grips the land. The people of Brittania are oppressed and downtrodden. You realise that you and your two companions have to do something about it. But what??

This is the major problem you are pitted with in *Ultima V*, but there are many, many others. The game itself is well structured. Your group is



▲ *The Amulet of Britannia.*

AV



depicted in the game as an individual person, who wanders about from town to towwn. If you get into a combat situation you are quickly whipped off the screen and replaced by a contains your party plus the opponents you are to fight. You then have three options, reatreat, fight or die.

The combat system is somewhat put in the shade however by the realistic, living world that surrounds you. The game is all about exploring and putting little pieces of information together, so that you get the whole picture. As you travel the world you will come across towns, settlements and individual huts. Depending on the time of day, the people in the towns will react differently. If you approach shop keepers as dinner time or closing time, they will rudely tell you to come back when they are open.

What makes the game for me is the role playing angle. You see, in *Ultima V* you can talk to near enough every character you meet, and this alone means over a couple of thousand people!! All have something to say and their conversation can range from the release of Ultima's next product to where you can find a holy shrine.

Some characters, like yourself, can cast magic spells. A wise player only casts well known spells in battle or dire consequences may occur. Spells range from the useful "Negate Poison", to the very useful "Great Flame", in which a great ball of fire smashes into the victim, doing immense damage.

There is a great deal of humour in the game. I met a magician who was looking for a talking horse, and would reward me if I found it, a demon who had renounced evil and was working for the forces of good, another magician who had turned himself into a mouse via a magical accident and a farmer, plus several other people, who were in the mysterious "resistance", but would only let me in if I knew the password. Oh, there was also the farmer who was bored with his lot and wanted to be a fantasy role playing author!! He gave me all kinds of information on Origin's next product.

Turning to the negative aspects of the game for a moment, I wasn't too impressed with the graphics. Both your party and the monsters look like matchstick men who have been on a four week Arnie Swartzenegger body building course, and the colours of the countryside were pretty lurid. Furthermore, the sound is nothing more than a series of bleeps and clicks. *Dungeonmaster*, the yard stick by which all computer Fantasy Role Playing games are judged, would slaughter this game in that respect. However, in return, *Ultima V* would leave *Dungeonmaster* standing when it comes to interaction with characters, combat tactics and strategy. The game is also nicely packaged and it contains the usual Origin freebies. This time you get the obligatory tea towel/map plus a large coin that is supposed to be the codex of Ultima wisdom. I only wish it was!!

Ultima V is a marathon of a game. One of the best computer RPG's I have played.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	8

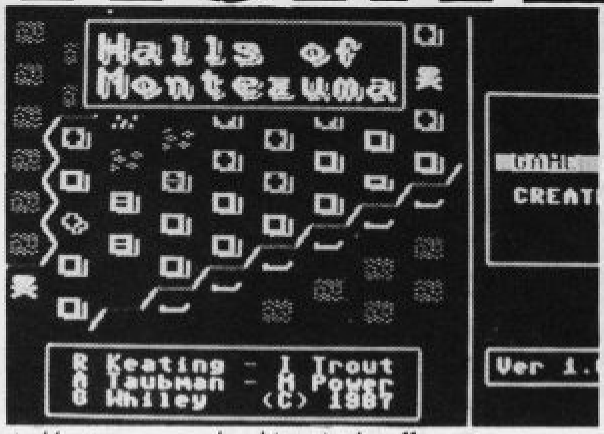
UPDATE . . .

IBM PC and Commodore 64 versions of Ultima V will be on sale at the end of August. An Apple version is already available and ST and Amiga versions will be launched in October.

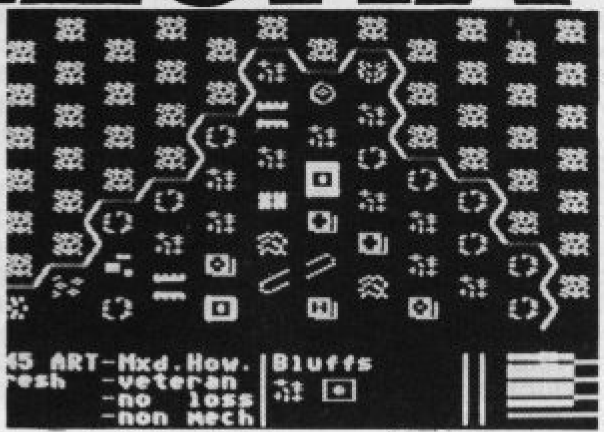


▲ *You don't need to have played the first four – but it helps.*

HALLS OF MONTEZUMA



▲ *Montezuma makes historical gaffs.*



▲ *Let down by rudimentary graphics.*

► MACHINES: CBM 64, APPLE II.
► SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP.
► PRICE: £18.95.
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: STEVE BADSEY.

The Australians of SSG have gone all out for the American market with this "battle history of the United States Marine Corps" in eight scenarios. It judges the Marines by their own standards – they are almost as good as they think they are – but unlike some American games does not make them completely bullet-proof.

Using the same mechanisms as, and fully compatible with, their earlier games *Battlefront* and *Battles in Normandy*, this game follows the Marines from the assault on Mexico City in 1848 which gives the game its name (and the Marine Hymn its first line) through the taking of Belleau Wood in France in World War One, plus one scenario for Iwo Jima and two for Okinawa in World War Two, the Inchon landings and defence of Pusan in the Korean War, and the recapture of Hue citadel in Vietnam. In addition, as is now normal with SSG games, the disk contains a design section, which with SSG's *Warplan* and *Warpaint* routines already added allows you to edit every useful unit and terrain icon in the game and create any scenario you desire, down to the weather.

Why then, did I find myself thinking as I played *Halls of Montezuma*, "oh no, not again!"

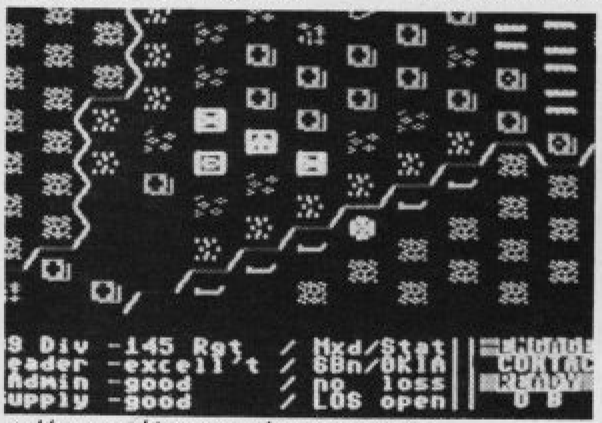
Mainly because of the continued awfulness of the SSG *Battlefront* style graphics. In land wargames, maps are absolutely crucial to understanding what is going on, where your own forces are and what the enemy is likely to do. The SSG hex-map does not show the whole battlefield properly and dissolves rather than scrolls, making it very difficult to read (and giving you an almighty headache). Any units shown on it move in a completely unrealistic way and are often not recognisable as either friend or enemy. The map actually gets in the way of the game.

If improving the graphics is a problem of computer memory then SSG would do better to scrap them altogether, letting the player rely on the printed maps that they supply with the game. This would produce something like an adventure game, with the player in his "command post" receiving reports on the battle from outside.

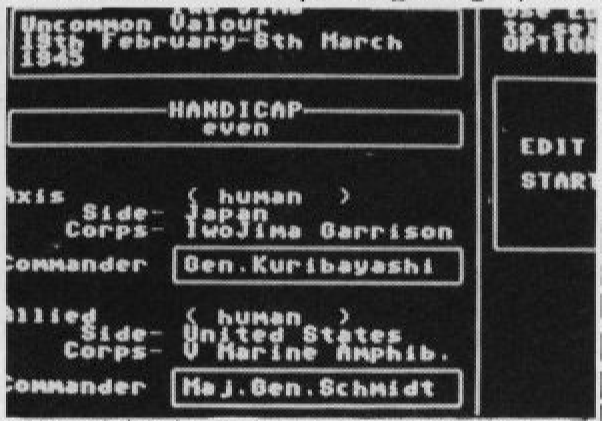
The *Battlefront* game mechanism used in *Halls of Montezuma* produces a one or two player game in which each side's forces must be divided into up to three main units, but no more. This did not work well in *Battles in Normandy* and works even less well for these scenarios. Mexico City itself, the teaching scenario, is among those considerably altered from history to fit the game. (It was a surprise, commanding the North Koreans, to learn that the computer thought my forces were "The Axis".) But the game is not all bad. The method of selecting highlighted options and interrogating your forces down to two levels below your command, by far the best mechanism of the game, remains as good as ever.

What is worrying is that the earliest of the SSG games, the strategy games such as *Reach for the Stars* and *Carriers at War*, remain, for me, by far their best. Operational land warfare requires a different games system, and far better graphics than this. On the other hand, if you liked *Battlefront*, then *Halls of Montezuma* is for you.

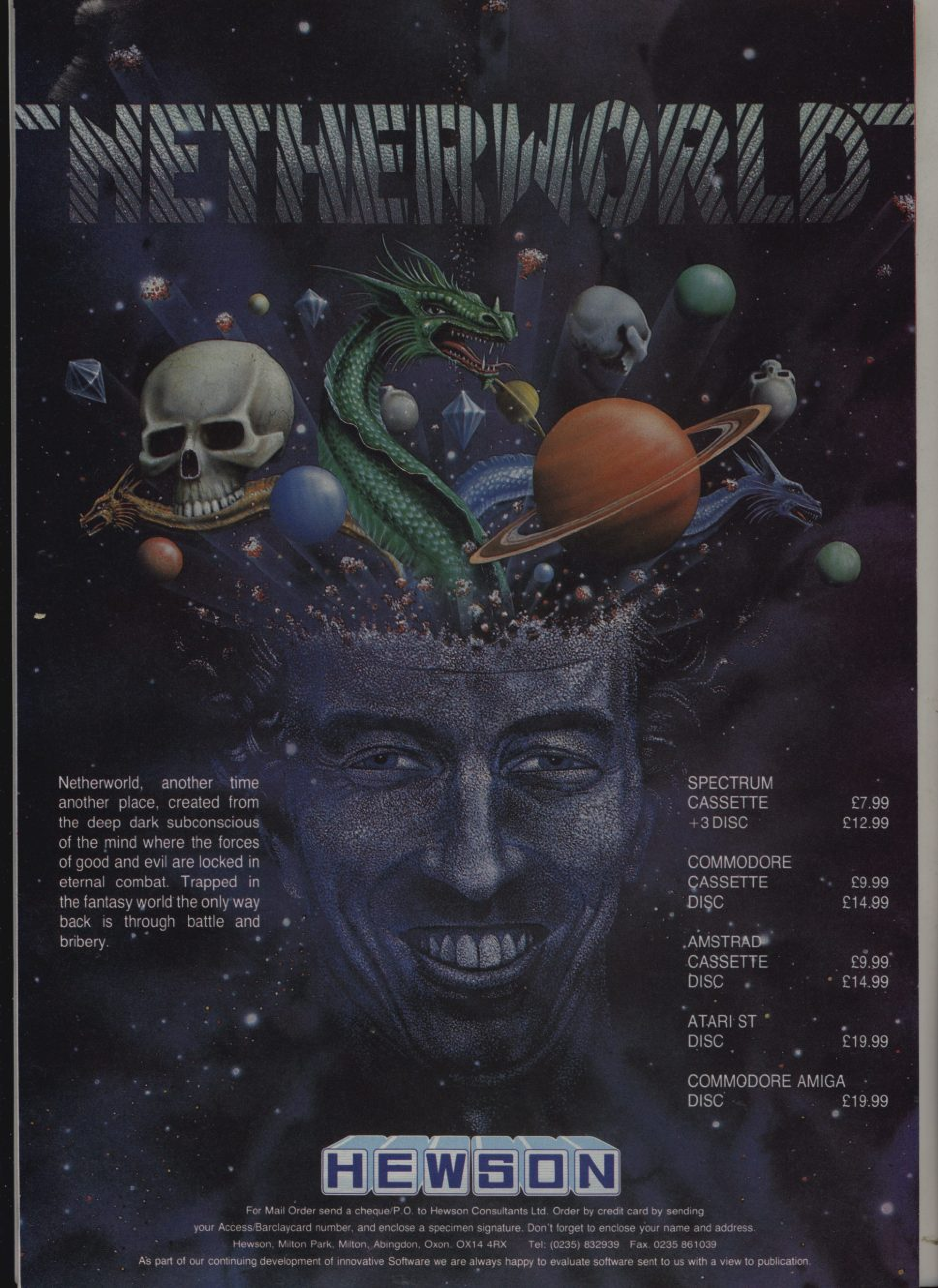
► GRAPHICS	3
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	6

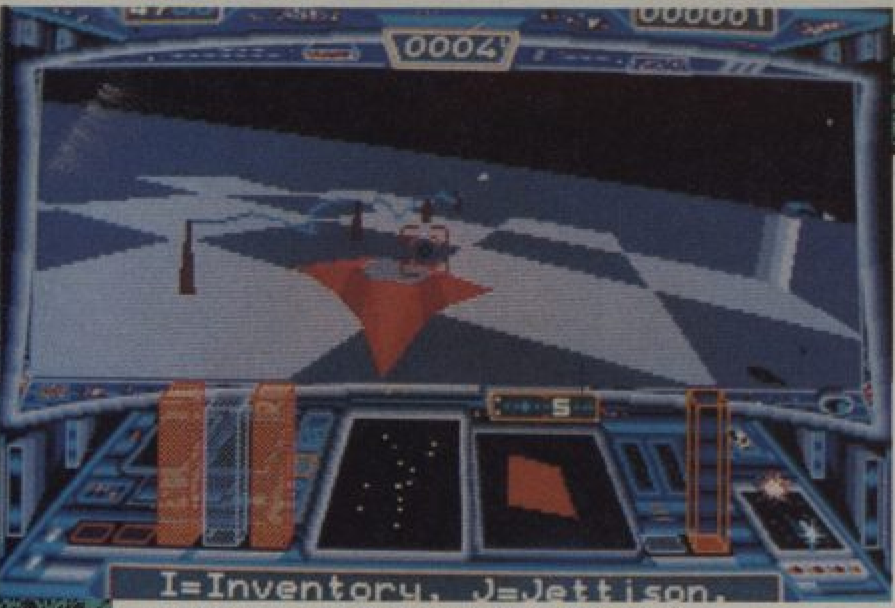


▲ *Maps and icons syndrome prevails.*

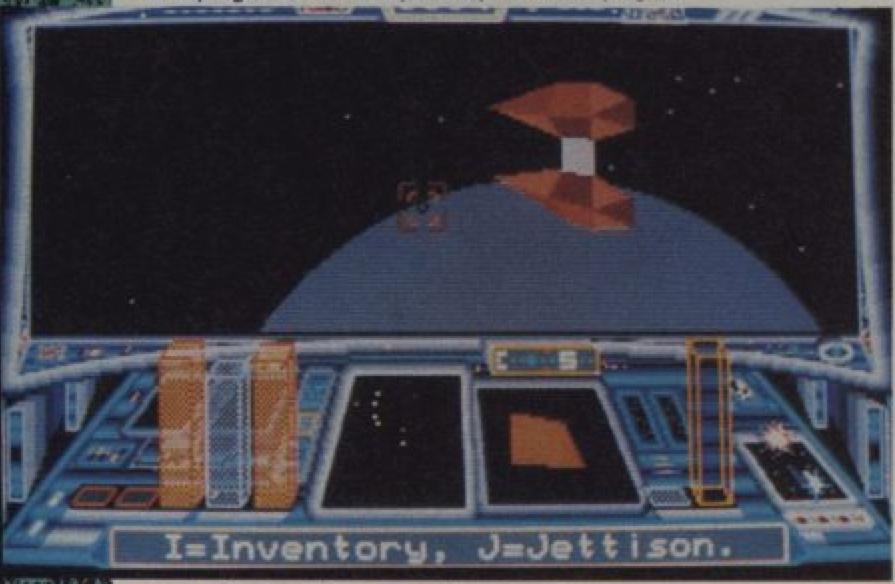


▲ *Major Schmidt squares up to General Kuribayashi.*


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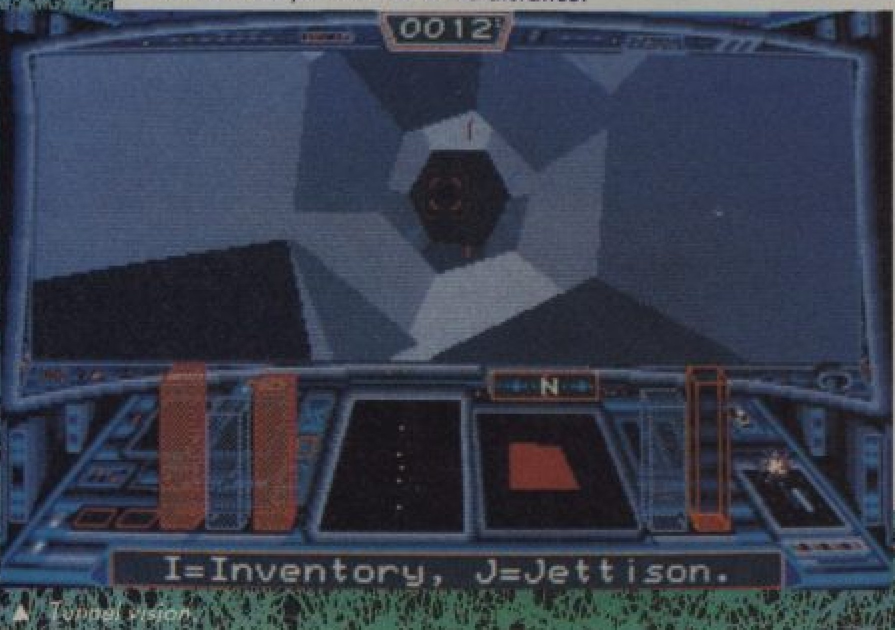
▲ *Flying over the chequered plains of Apogee.*



▲ *A pirate ship approaches*



▲ *That's a power line in the distance.*



▲ *Tunnel vision*

STA

► **MACHINES: AMIGA/ ATARI ST.**
► **SUPPLIER: RAINBIRD.**
► **PRICE: £24.95.**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST/ AMIGA/PC/64.**
► **REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.**

The much heralded *Stargliger* was launched in late 1986 and was arguably one of the first truly 16-bit games. An excellent version did appear on the Spectrum (courtesy of the talented Realtime programming team who recently produced *Carrier Command)* but it was the Atari ST and Amiga versions with their fast, colourful vector graphics and sampled sound effects that really shone.

Although *Starglider II* looks complicated, it's basically a shoot 'em up, with the player completing a series of objectives in a strict order. Games never vary. The sequel, on the other hand, looks complicated. And is. It's more like Paul Woake's classic *Mercenary* than anything else. However, it has much more depth. Much, much more . . .

The biggest change is the graphics. The vectors have been replaced by technicolor filled-3D graphics which move smoothly and very quickly. The 3D effect is truly outstanding – if you think *Interceptor* looks impressive, wait until you see these! The sheer variety of shapes, the Pac-Worm and Pulsing Pyramids, are amazing, the fluid animation and movement, and the feeling of depth is absolutely incredible, and sets new standards for others to aspire to.

Not only are the visuals impressive, sound has been used exceptionally well. Each craft and piece of machinery makes its own distinctive noise, which gets louder and softer as the player approaches and moves away. The Atari ST sound effects are very good, but are eclipsed by the Amiga version, which sounds absolutely incredible. There's also a brilliant Amiga soundtrack, which also works on Atari STs with a double-sided drive.

One thing that mustn't go unmentioned is the fact that the disk is specially formatted to work on either an ST or Amiga – you can stick the same disk in both machines! There are few noticable differences between the two, apart from the Amiga's superior sound effects and the fact that it moves just a little more smoothly.

The plot follows on from *Starglider*. The Egron forces that the player battled in the AGAV two years ago have become even more powerful. They've conquered and occupied the resource-enriched Solice System, and are currently consolidating their position and building mighty war vehicles in readiness to conquer the galaxy.

They must be stopped at all costs.

As Jaysan, hero of *Starglider*, it's the player's task to pilot a small state-of-the-art Icarus craft behind enemy lines and single handedly bring the entire Egron military machine to its knees, thus saving the galaxy. Now this might sound a tall order, but using cunning and stealth rather than gung-ho suicide tactics, it is just possible that the Egron forces could be thwarted...

The odds sound a little more favourable when the Icarus is examined. Originally designed as a Police patrolcraft, it's equipped with a Plasma Drive power unit and Stardrive (designed on the planet Cosworth), a 250-round gas-plasma laser and has a Valium Dynamics energy absorption hull protected by Hi-Lev sheild. Although the shield is the best of its type, it's diminished when

ARGLIDER II

the Icarus sustains hits, collides with other craft or buildings or flies too near the sun. Fortunately it's possible to replenish shield energy in a variety of ways.

A very useful feature is the five-channel expansion bus, which allows up to five enhancement modules to be bolted onto the Icarus. These include Time-Warp Cuboids, Fire and Flee Missiles, Bouncing Bombs and a Neutron Bomb.

Finally, the Icarus has a large cargo deck which holds three items, including reserve enhancement modules. Items may be brought aboard using the tractor beam, which envelopes a selected object so that it can be examined, and drawn into the cargo bay if necessary.

The Solice System consists of five planets, some of which are orbited by moons, and a hazardous asteroid belt. Now, incredible though it may seem, the entire system, asteroids and all, has been programmed into the game so that a player may take off from one planet, cross the spaceways and land on another planet or moon. Each planet revolves, so that there are days and nights – you can actually see the sun rise and set. The shadows and colour of the sky changes as the sun moves across the sky, until night falls. On some planets there's even thunder and lightning!

Every planet has its own distinctive environment. Dante, a small red planet nearest the sun is inhabited by a small Ergon task force and a very strange collection of animals, grossly mutated into strage forms by the intense radiation. It's an undesirable place to land, scattered with volcanoes and gas eruptions.

Vista is a blue planet, second nearest the sun, covered in marshlands and populated by weird creatures.

The grey planet of Apogee is next. Here the Ergons have their base, so military and industrial presence are very high. Apogee has two moons, Enos and Castron, both of which are Ergon-dominated.

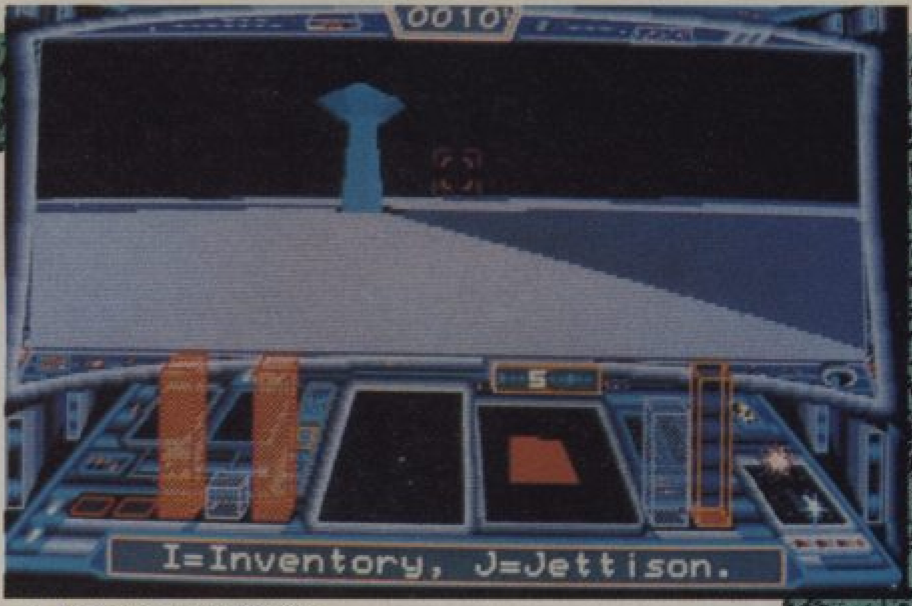
Millway is a huge, red planet which cannot be approached too closely due to the very high atmosphere pressure. However, there is a high-altitude presence of both Egron military forces and strange creatures, including a robot duck! Millway has seven moons, Broadway, Apex, Esprit, Questa, Westmere, Synapse and Wackfunk, all heavily industrialised.

Finally there's Aldos, another planet heavily populated by the Egrons, and apparently the construction sight of a huge space station, which will be the flagship of the Egron invasion fleet. Aldos' moon, Q-Beta, has itself a small, yellow moon, although radio telescopes can get no reading of its presence. A mystery that should no doubt be investigated?

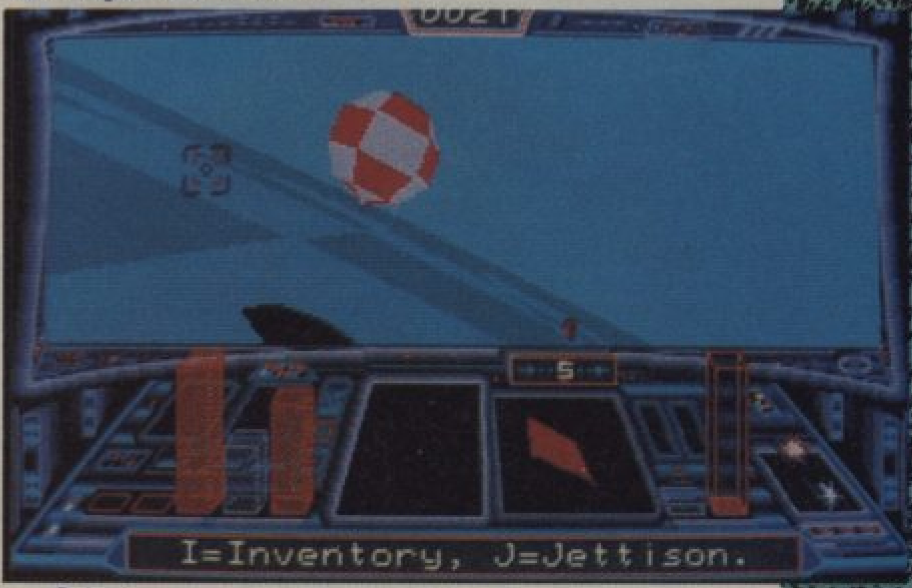
Travelling from planet to planet is made possible with the Stardrive, which kicks in at the press of a key and speeds up the Icarus by a factor of eight. Fortunately the planets are quite close together, so a journey never takes more than a couple of minutes – anyway, there are always pirate space ships to watch out for, as well as asteroids. When the destination is reached, the drive is switched off and the ship goes into planetfall, where it can either be guided downwards through the atmosphere to the surface, or flown back up into space again.

The mission actually starts on the surface of Apogee, right in the thick

Continued on page 44.



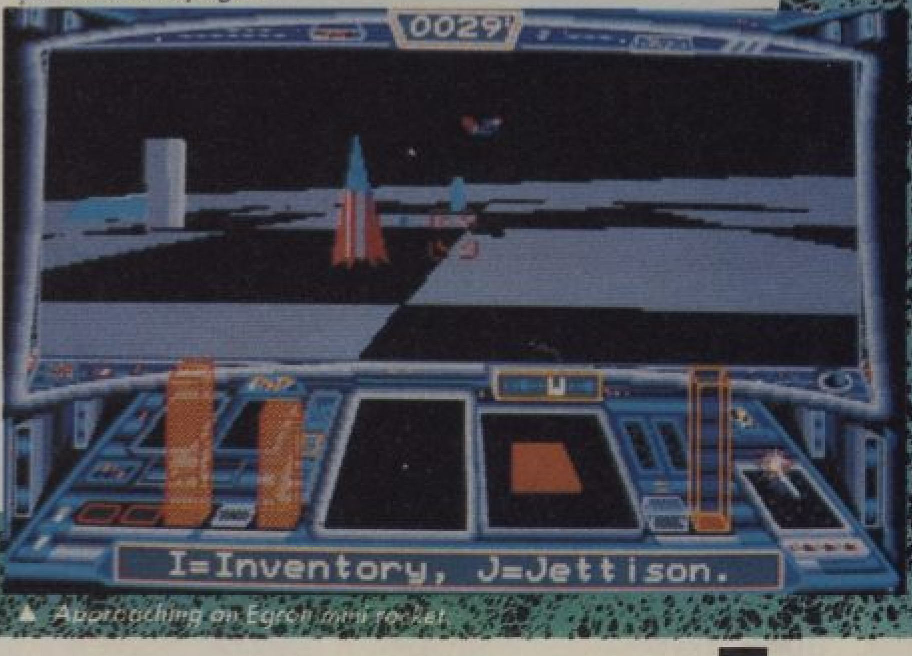
▲ An Egron control tower.



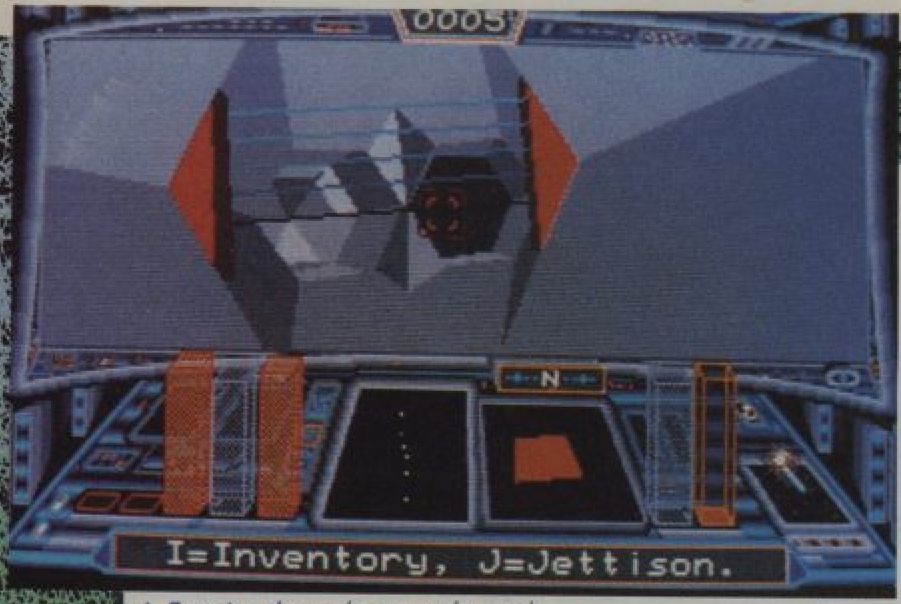
▲ Boing!



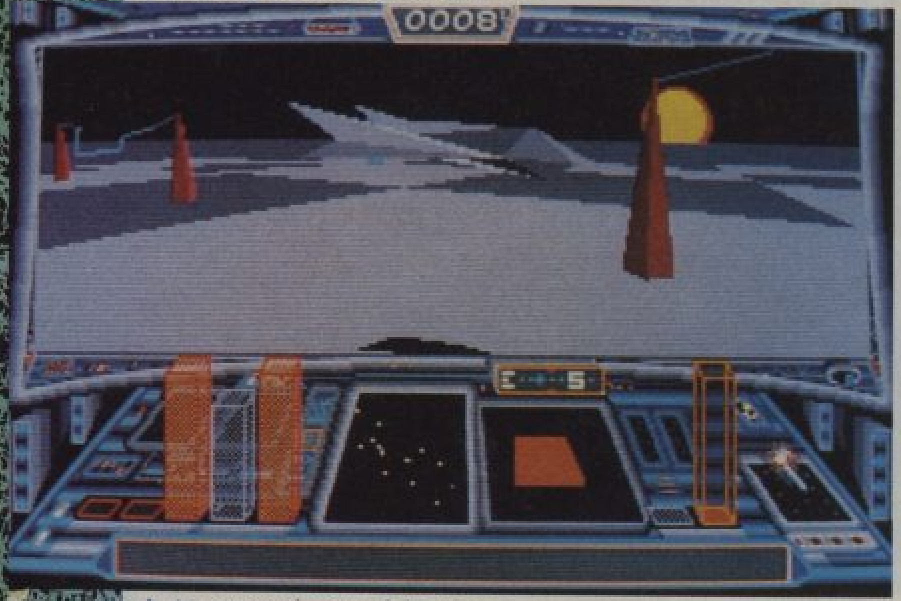
▲ Sunrise on Apogee.



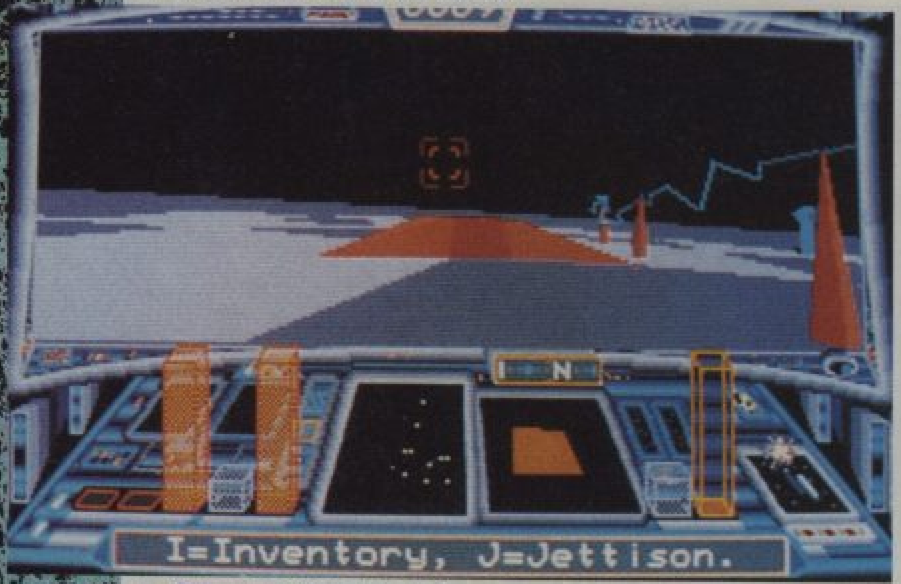
▲ Approaching an Egron mini rocket.



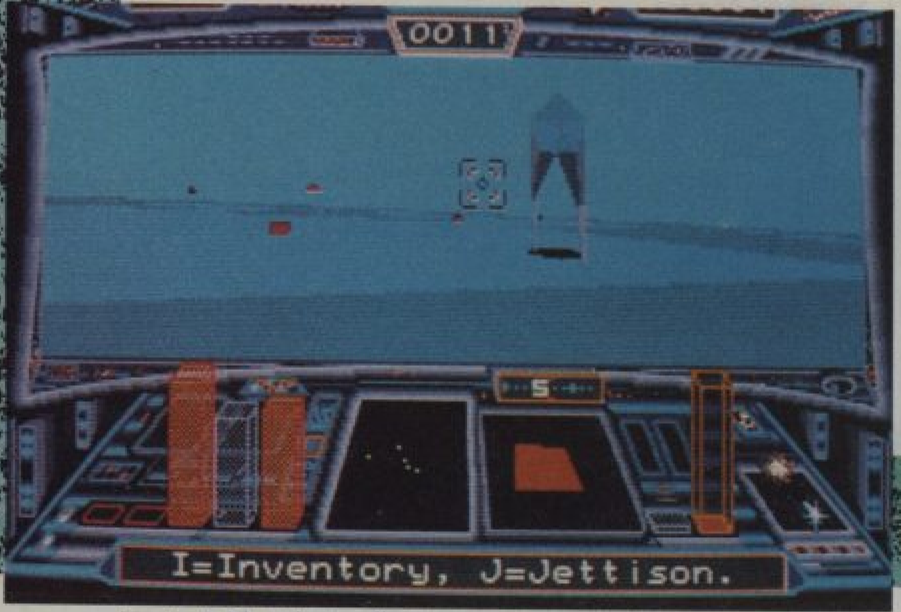
▲ Entering the underground tunnel.



▲ An external view of the Icarus.



▲ Swooping low over a silo.



▲ Blast that walker!

Continued from page 43.

of things! Stompers walk about, ground and flying craft zoom around, and all manner of strange, alien buildings are scattered across the chequered plain. After a few minutes exploration, what looks like a large red crater can be found. Flying the ship slowly over the lip reveals a tunnel, down which the Icarus may be flown – yes, some planets also have huge underground chambers to explore!

The tunnel winds its way down into the planet, with other passages branching off in different directions.

This subterranean system is quite extensive and is the key to the game. When the Ergons invaded, the original peaceful inhabitants of the Solice System fled below ground. Finding them is of paramount importance, since it's only with their help that the Ergon threat can be neutralised. Any interaction with the underground people is displayed via on-screen text messages. Prompts and questions are answered by typing yes or no.

Once contact has been made, the mission really begins. I'm not going to tell you what exactly you have to do (it would spoil half the fun) but completing the mission involves collecting, amongst other things, a crate of sweets, a flat diamond, an asteroid and a Professor who's currently leading a research team on Broadway.

It's certainly a tough task, and fortunately the programmers have included a load/save game option – without it the mission would be virtually impossible.

One of the many appealing factors of *Starglider II* is that it can be played either as an adventure (as it should be played) or as a shoot 'em up like its forerunner (in that respect I found it far more varied and enjoyable than *Starglider* ever was).

The presentation is without flaw. Just about every aspect of the control method can be adjusted, and the on-screen presentation is superb. During a game, the viewpoint can be altered in a variety of ways so the proceedings can be viewed from inside or outside the Icarus. There are also options to look in all directions, which is useful just in case something tries to sneak up from behind.

If you get bored with playing, there's the 'painting with Rolf' option which allows the user to look at all the objects in the game, cycle through their animations, rotate them in any way at a variety of speeds and even paint with them!

Starglider II is an incredible program that pushes computer gaming to new heights. I can quite honestly say that I've never been so entralled and addicted by any other game – the urge to explore is incredible. I've already spent many, many hours travelling the spaceways instead of sleeping and I'm sure that the weeks ahead will see much burning of the midnight oil!

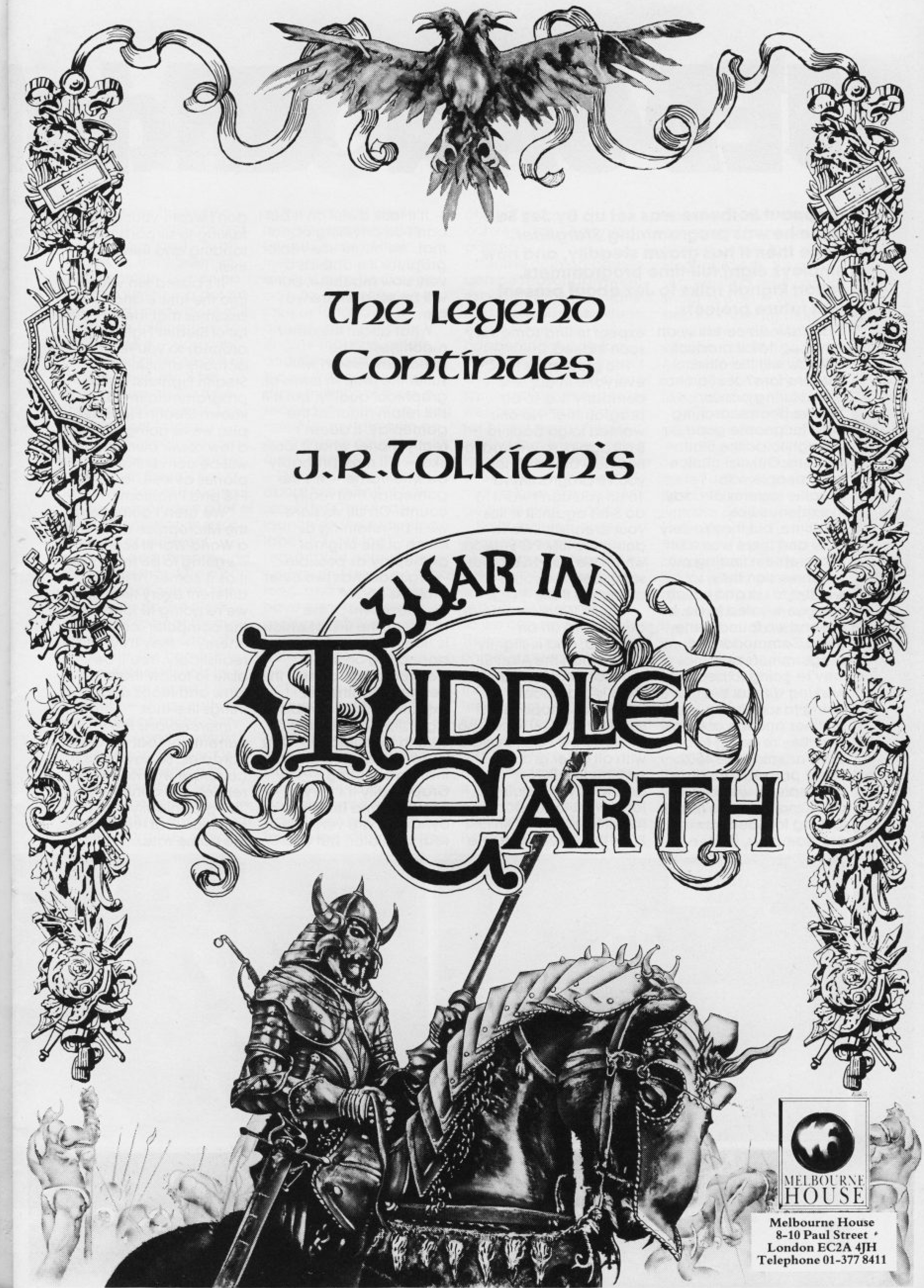
Buy it, and prepare to be amazed!

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	9

UPDATE . . .

***Starglider II* is available now for the ST and Amiga. We have also seen a PC version which looked unbelievably fast.**

Commodore 64 versions are also planned and a Spectrum version is being investigated. Julian Rignall has the full 'behind the scenes' story on Starglider II and all its versions in his exclusive interview with Argonaut boss – Jez San – overleaf.


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JEZ SAN and th

Argonaut Software was set up by Jez San while he was programming *Starglider.* Since then it has grown steadily, and now employs eight full-time programmers. Julian Rignall talks to Jez about present and future projects.

Starglider II is certainly an amazing 16-bit product, but how will the other versions fare? Jez San has a reassuring answer: "We've been searching hard for people good enough to do the 8-bit versions. Our first choice were people with graphic systems already in existence like Realtime, but they're very busy and there was a bit of a problem finding out which version they wanted to do and which ones we wanted to do. In the end we found some good Commodore 64 programmers and they're going to be working with us. We're going to supply our routines and lots of help, and they're going to be programming the 6502. That'll probably include the Apple as well but we don't know yet. We're still looking for Spectrum programmers, but we expect to find some very soon indeed.

The problem is that everyone in our company is a 16-bit programmer. No-one wanted to go back to 8-bit again, so we had to find new blood. Once you've programmed 16-bit you don't want to do 8-bit again. It stifles your creativity. We're doing the IBM PC version, which we call 16-bit, but some people would argue it is 8-bit.

"The PC version is being developed on an Amstrad, and is slightly slower than the Atari ST, but looks worse because CGA is graphically inferior. We hope to speed it up a bit, and also make sure it's compatible with all other graphics systems like BGA and Tandy. It requires a lot of work to support all the different IBMs. An IBM PC is the very lowest one – it'll look awful on it but I can't do anything about that. We might use vector graphics if it detects a very slow machine, but it will be solid where we can."

What about the other machines? "The Spectrum version will suffer the most in terms of graphical quality, but it'll still retain much of the gameplay. It doesn't really matter what it looks like – it'll most probably be wire frame – it's the gameplay that really counts. On all versions we'll be retaining as much of the original gameplay as possible."

Argonaut has two other projects under development at the moment, the first of which is *Hawk,* which will be appearing on the Electronic Arts label in the next few months. Jez explains: "It's a combat flight simulator based on Stealth technology – you know, F19 and B2 and all that kind of thing. Graphically it's very complex and the flight dynamics are very like a real simulator, but you don't waste your time talking to airports and landing and things like that.

"It's based ten years into the future and assumes that there are a lot of Stealth Fighters around, so you're actually attacking Stealth Fighters. We've programmed in all known Stealth Fighters plus we're going to invent a few of our own. There will be conventional planes as well, like F16, F18 and Phantoms.

"We aren't going to go the Microprose route with a World War III scenario: it's going to be more 'take it as it comes'. It'll be different every time and we're going to town on the computer- controlled enemy – they'll fly 100% realisticaly. You'll be able to follow them in turns and loops and things like that."

Interceptor is the current combat simulator yardstick, so how does it compare with Hawk? Jez replies with confidence: "It's graphically much superior – at least twice the frame rate.





The ARGONAUTS

"Gamewise there's no comparison: ours has got real strategy and lots of planes on the screen. In *Interceptor* there can be a plane which is a dot on the screen and you're still supposed to fly around and chase it – you only get a brief glimpse of it up big. In *Hawk* you'll be dogfighting all the time. There's a lot more in it too – we've got fractal mountain terrains in some parts of the game and in other parts there's flat land with lots of buildings.

"We've included a lot of ground combat; there's landing on different runways and airports and things like that. Mid-air refuelling of course. We wanted to do the flight simulator to beat them all, and we put enough people in the company with different talents to make an all round product – it's a really full combat simulation; very graphical and very fast.'

The second project is a coin-op conversion of a Sega game that derives its name from a device in an aircraft jet engine that ignites extra fuel, which at the moment has to remain nameless. Jez reveals more of the mystery game: 'We got excited by a particular coin-op. It's not going to take us long to do it – we already have a sprite engine that can enlarge and decrease, flip in the X and Y direction and draw millions of them a second, and that's all you need for certain coin-op conversions coupled with our 3D maths.

"We're due to finish it in about two month's time ready for Christmas launch on the Activision label. It's looking reasonable considering we haven't been on it that long, and we ought to have something worth seeing in about a month."

How does Jez view coin-op conversions in general?

"I think a coin-op conversion done well is very good, but I haven't seen too many conversions done well. The best coin-op conversion so far is *Buggy Boy*, and even that could have been better. I'm not impressed with any of the current crop of conversions; *Outrun* is pathetic.

"Some coin-op games can be reasonably well, especially the Pacmans and the Gauntlets where not very much is happening but it's fun. But *Outrun*, where there's a lot going on and a lot of sprite action, needs to be well programmed and so far hasn't been. I'm not saying that we are going to change all that, but we are going to change all that, but we are certainly going to do it better'.

So how much does Argonaut watch other programming teams? Jez admits: "We're active in what everyone else is up to, to steer clear of them so we can stay original. There's no point treading on other peoples' toes. I play a lot of coin-ops, that's where all the new technology is. I've got a *Star Wars* machine at home, and I've also got a *Starglider* arcade machine in my lounge. It's really good, but it won't be released over here because Bally/Sente have just closed their coin-op division. All their programmers have moved across to Electronic Arts. It's a shame, it's a really good shoot 'em up – very hard, and far more immediate than the computer version. I really liked *Marble Madness*, it was a favourite for years. I also liked *I Robot*.

I Robot has a shape painting option. Did the 'Painting with Rolf' option on *Starglider II* come from there? Jez acknowledges that he did enjoy playing with the drawing option, but explains: "Paint with Rolf was a bug. We've always got a shape editor in our games, and one day it didn't clear the screen and we thought, that's great! So when we finished the game we put in some options, and the end result is great – everyone loves it. It's fascinating to doodle with walkers".

And indeed it is. With that, Jez had to rush off to the duplicators to check that they were managing to copy *Starglider II* correctly.





Reviews

SPACE HARRIER

► **MACHINES: ATARI ST/ AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELITE.**
► **PRICES: £19.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.**
► **REVIEWER: STEVE JARRATT.**

Sega's amazing coin-op with the hydraulically manipulated console first appeared as a conversion around a year and a half ago. Although a good seller, *Space Harrier* was generally regarded as something of a disappointment – due mainly to the restrictions imposed by the smaller, eight-bit machines.

Now – and after quite a delay (I saw working and apparently finished levels of the ST version at last year's PCW show) – *Space Harrier* has finally arrived on the 16-bitters. The main difference between these and earlier versions are the colourful graphics plus the speed and quality of the 3D update. The chequerboard floor moves extremely smoothly, and the sprites are nicely drawn, although still quite jerky at times.

As with its predecessors, however, the game suffers from one major flaw: since the action is viewed from behind the main character he successfully blocks any fire heading directly for him. This frequently leads to the loss of a life simply because oncoming missiles are completely hidden from view.

Ultimately, *Space Harrier* is disappointing. Without the novelty of being thrown around in the hydraulic seat, the game is reduced to a fairly average shoot 'em up which, at worst, can be extremely frustrating. Having said that, this is the definitive Space Harrier, and the one to go for if you're a fan of the coin-op. The Amiga version should be more or less identical.

▼ *Space Harrier – disappointing.*



► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	5
► OVERALL	6

UPDATE . . .

Only the Amiga versions of Space Harrier and Bombjack are now outstanding. All 8-bit versions have been available for well over a year.

BOMBJACK

► **MACHINES: ATARI ST/ AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELITE**
► **PRICES: £19.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.**
► **REVIEWER: STEVE JARRATT.**

Elite's eight-bit versions of the Tecmo coin-op appeared back in 1986 and now, with the advent of the 16-bitters, Elite has taken the opportunity of dusting off the old title and shoving on a new price tag.

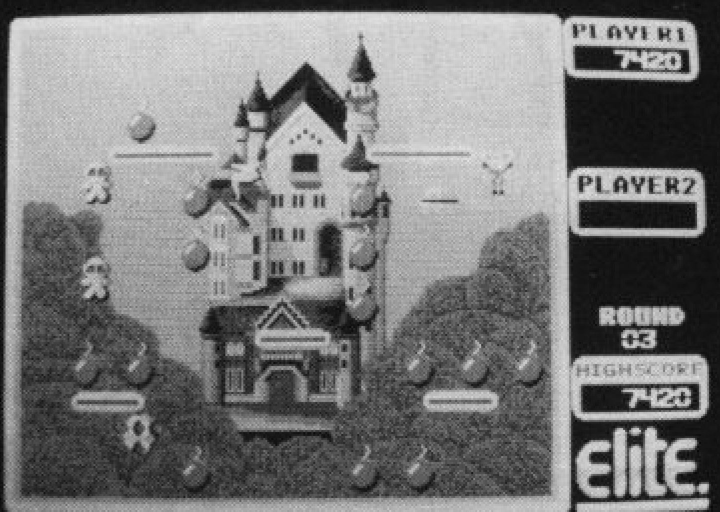
Bomb Jack is a small caped crusader-type character who travels the world – suitably represented by a series of appealing backdrops – in order to 'defuse' bombs which appear on each screen.

Each bomb is made safe simply by flying into it, and once the current screen has been totally cleared, the next, more difficult one, can be attempted. There are six screens in all, cycling round with different platform layouts to add variety.

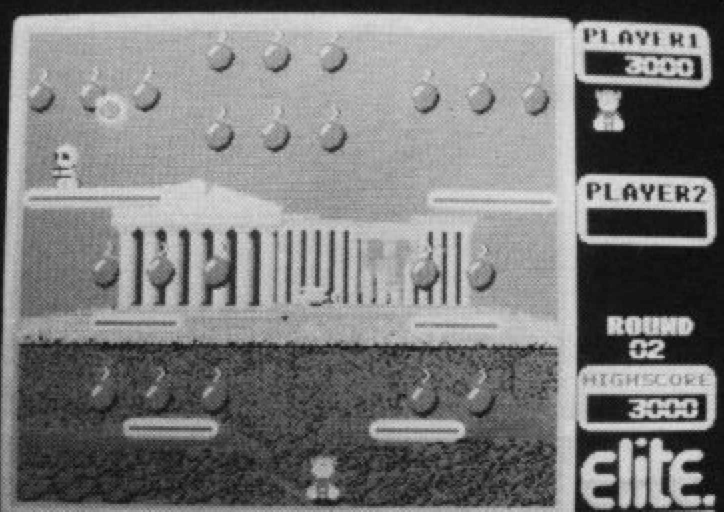
A mixture of airborne beings hinder Jack's mission, contact with them signals the removal of one of his three lives. There are also extra bonus icons which float around the screen, including an extra life, a bonus multiplier to rapidly increase scores and a power pill which temporarily turns all on-screen meanies into shiny coins to be collected for additional points.

The ST version reviewed is extremely close to the arcade game but for one or two artistic licenses and the music. It is fun to play, but at twenty quid represents a rather a dubious investment.

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	4
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	6



▲ *Bombjack goes defusing.*



▲ *Action at the Acropolis.*


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History i

The first 3 years

Computer Industry sources spoke of alarm and disquiet today as US Gold – Europe's forerunners in home entertainment software – announced plans for a September release that marks a milestone in the development of the home computer industry. Titled "HISTORY IN THE MAKING", it chronicles the early giant successes of this exciting industry and is regarded by many experts to be the finest single collection of computer games ever produced...... a real must for computer enthusiasts and a true collector's item to be treasured for years to come.

In just four short years home computer entertainment has grown into a furious and exciting industry not only bringing much pleasure and enjoyment to many youngsters throughout Great Britain and Europe, but creating a whole industry that has made enormous strides forward in technology and the standards of entertainment.

No company has done more to advance the cause than US Gold. Deriving its name from the early activities of importing software from America and adapting it for the home market, US Gold has constantly led from the front, outstripping competitors in satisfying the demands of an increasingly discerning public. US Gold now stands firmly at the head of a very stable and vital industry leaving behind it many memorable and outstanding achievements.

Now the company has announced plans to create another shockwave – it's taking those early masterpieces from its own outstanding success and bringing them together in one collection – 15 true classics in all. A spokesman for US Gold is not surprised at the market's reaction when he commented to our reporters: "US Gold *is* the entertainment software industry in the UK and now Europe.

"In short, the collection will appeal to everyone – it's not just a compilation of games but a true chronicle of the development of this fantastic industry of ours."

It's hardly surprising our competitors are unhappy. From the very early days we were the innovators and we therefore developed some real innovative games – games that can be called classics of their time.



NEWS

NEWS

NEWS

NEWS

MONDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1988

in the Making

No one has achieved so much and no one is able to command such outstanding software. Now a mature market is in residence, we decided that the time was right to make a bold statement about how significant and impressive computer software is, we therefore collected together these classics – collected from only our first three years – and are to publish them in one historic pack. Many of today's enthusiasts may have been too young to have played the originals – it's obviously a real treat for them and many of the older players will treasure the value that such a collection offers. In short, the collection will appeal to everyone – it's not just a compilation of games but a true chronicle of the development of this fantastic industry of ours."

BEACH HEAD... the leader of the pack, US Gold's 1st quarter of a million seller. **BRUCE LEE...** the first famous face to join US Gold. **SPYHUNTER...** Bally Midway's armoured car classic became a home computer cult. **RAID...** Impressive yet controversial, Raid hit the headlines in the national press. **GOONIES...** Spielberg film translated into the first simultaneous two player interactive arcade game. **SUPERCYCLE...** the Epyx spectactular on two wheels. Fast and furious – an all-time racing classic. **WORLD GAMES...** around the world with 8 incredible, and unusual events by Epyx. **EXPRESS RAIDER...** a rootin', tootin', arcade action – the Easter hit of that year. **INFILTRATOR...** arcade, strategy simulation – all ingredients that culminated into a European No. 1. **BEACH HEAD II...** tough action sequel, another monster chartbuster by Access. **GAUNTLET...** the biggest selling computer game 1986/87, over 300,000 sold – the 1st great arcade conversion. **ROAD RUNNER...** the summer No. 1 of that year – cartoon, coin-op capers from Atari Games. **IMPOSSIBLE MISSION...** the benchmark test for all subsequent platform games, still regarded by many as one of the greatest computer games of all time. **KUNG FU MASTER...** a Gallup No. 1 – Data East – often imitated, never emulated. **LEADERBOARD...** *"This is the sports simulation of the year – if not the decade"*, Zzap 64.



The games selected to honour this special collection are each of outstanding merit in their own right ...

Besides its possession as a collection piece the package is considered by many to offer unheard of value for money and an opportunity not to be missed. Many computer enthusiasts await eagerly the mid-September release and comments such as "I've started saving now...", "I wasn't into computers when the early releases came out, I'm looking forward to playing them now...", "I've only heard of such games as Beach Head, now's my chance to see what I've missed..." are common amongst the players that we've talked to.

"But the real winners are the buying public – it's fantastic value."

Perhaps one of the most informative comments was made by an industry insider: "US Gold seem to have done it again. Whilst we're all happily constructing compilations from any product we can find and offering them to the public as value-for-money packs, US Gold have put together the finest collection of classic games ever assembled and the support material and give-aways will be just as good and up to their usual amazing standard. Quite simply, I think we're all stunned once again, but the real winners are the buying public – it's fantastic value."

Where will US Gold go from here – well no one knows, all we can really say is that if they keep going on making history like this then they can only keep going on from success to success and all computer owners will be pleased for that to continue.

Reviews

LAND THAT TIME FORGOT

► **MACHINES: SPECTRUM 128, PC, ST.**
► **SUPPLIER: OCEAN.**
► **PRICE: SPEC CASS £7.95, DISK £14.95, OTHERS £19.95.**
► **VERSION TESTED: SPEC 128.**
► **REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.**

It's taken a long time, but that game with the boobs and the dinosaurs has finally landed on my desk. Better review it I suppose. Dum de dum, look at the inlay. Yawn, yet another 3 – D filmation type of affair. Load it up. Beee, dip. Bee diddley dip. Usual good loading screen. Nice long wait. Quite a bit of code this, well it is 128K only.

Your plane has crash landed somewhere in the midst of Tibet, on a small uncharted island. It's four occupants are unharmed but the plane is a write-off. Taking a look around they notice something strange. Something big and strange. Something big, strange and prehistoric. Something dinosaurlike.

You are in control of the four characters in the game, but obviously only one at a time, and can chop and change between them.

Jarret is the smooth, strong hunk of meat that you see on the inlay artwork. Pilot of the crashed plane, he is almost the perfect person to lead this band to safety.

Gloria, who is the stunning sexpot, also on the inlay, is a newlywed who, despite being a girlie, is one of the strongest members of the group, will wise, and is one of the last to complain about petty little things like falling off cliffs and being hit by boulders. Her husband Dirk is, well, Dirk. You can't really say much about him, apart from the fact that he's a bit of a weed and is always ready for a good moan. Clive, Gloria's dad is a rich, obese lump, and I find great delight in trying to get him to cross the rope bridge near the start of the game.

Oh, it's loaded. So, what have we got here. $&£''ing hell! This is berrilliant.This is the game your 128 was made for. This is fantastic. Oh, I'm dead. This is difficult!

An 8-directional filmation scroller, it's not hard to see why it couldn't fit on a 48K job. The playing area is massive, and all beautifully detailed. Huge mountain ranges bar your way in one direction, with an almost mazelike series of pathways between them. A river cuts across the middle of the island, and ends in a glorious waterfall. Check the screenshot and you'll see what I mean. Walk across the tops of the thick growth within the water, avoiding the tentacled things that lurk within, and you come to the natives. This is where the objects that are scattered about come in.

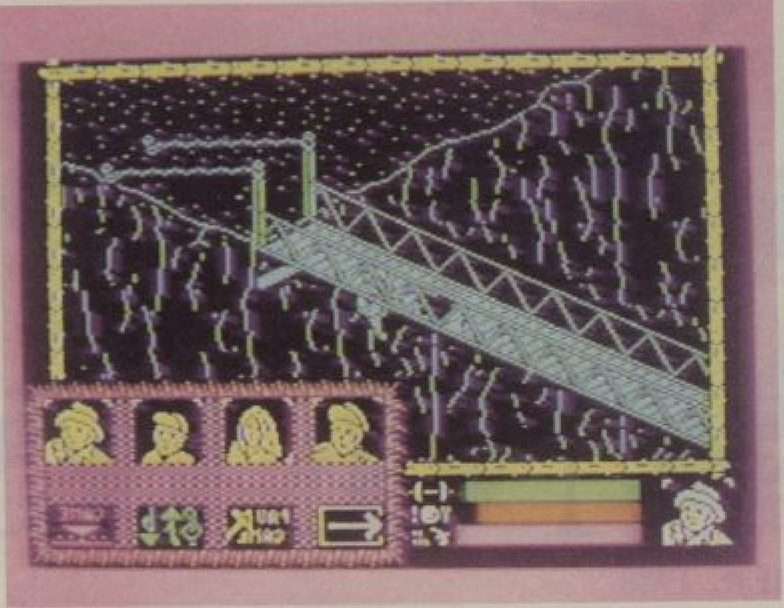
The objects are manipulated using a little window that you call up with the space bar. In the window are little portraits of the four characters, their current status (alive or dead) and things like a quit and pause option. Move your little arrow to a specific picture of a person, and another window will appear telling you what they are carrying and what items are nearby.

What makes this game so hard is the things like natives, dinosaurs, stegasauruses, and pterodactils.

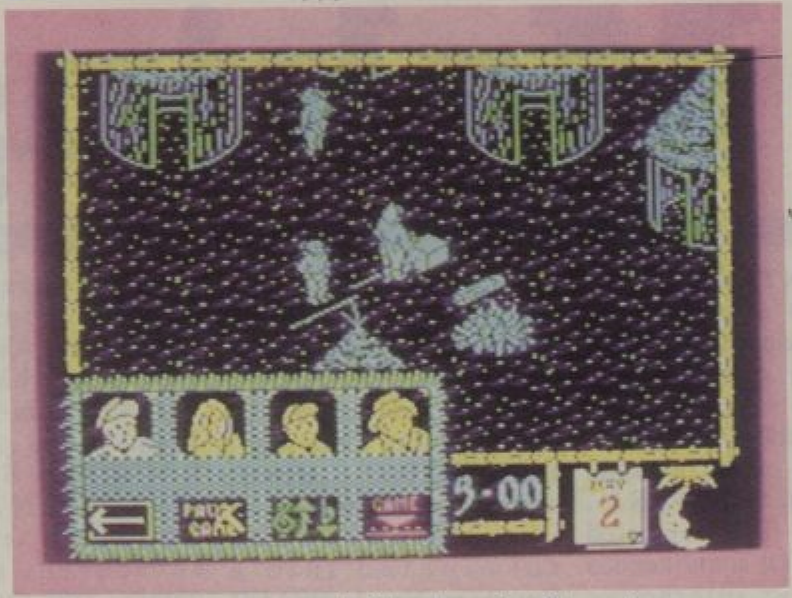
Everything else just trys to run you over, except the natives, who try to rape you, at least that's what it looks like. All you have to fight back with is a puny little gun.

The game is entirely monochromatic but this doesn't. In fact, if this game was in full Spectrum-O-Colour, I can visualise it being a bit of a mess.

Very easy to use and very attractive to look at, WTSS is yet another notch on Ocean's belt of good reputation. Congrats to Denton Designs on an excellent game.



▲ *Don't look down – snappy crocs below.*



▲ *Natives are not necessarily friendly – just like reviewers.*



▲ *Your crashed plane won't help you.*

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	8

UPDATE . . .

The ST version looks fab, retaining the feel of the Spectrum graphics, though making use of the machine's colour and definition. How it plays, though, hás yet to be seen.

LAND THAT TIME FORGOT

Reviews

TO HELL AN

► MACHINE: C64.
► SUPPLIER: CRL.
► PRICE: £9.95 CASS, £14.95 DISK.
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

To Hell and Back is the best CRL game we've seen in a while. Yes, I know that's not saying much, but after the gobble of turkeys they have recently foisted upon an unsuspecting software market, this is like a little glimpse of light at the end of the dark and dreary CLR tunnel. It's only a little glimpse, mind you: by any other standards this is still a very uninspired piece of gamemaking.

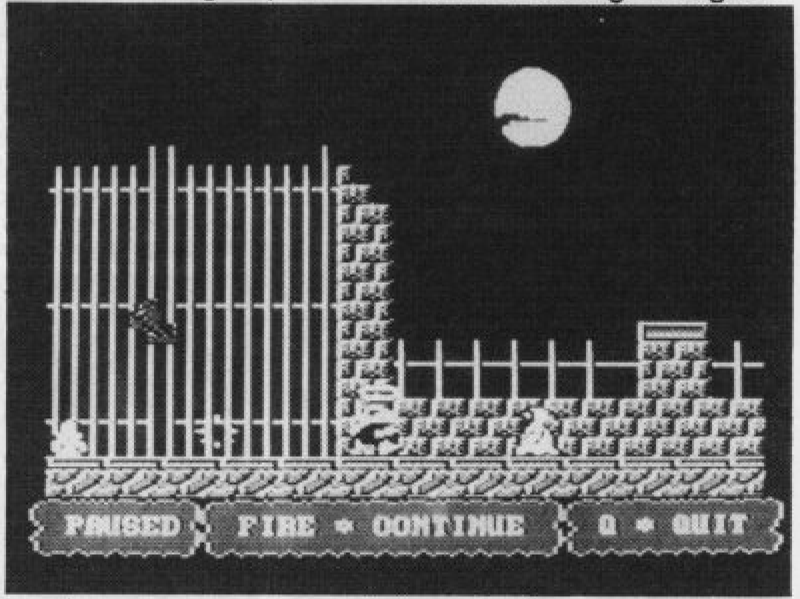
Apparently, things have been getting pretty decadent in programmer Andy Jervis's vision of heaven. Not only has Satan been allowed to just wander in and filch the Ten Commandments, but the angel sent down to the 'other place' to retrieve them is definitely on the porky side: he'd give *Chubby Gristle* a waddle for his money!

He does however come equipped with a handy-dandy boomerang halo with which to zap your attackers and supposedly 'transform them into angels and send them to heaven' though what the vicious curs have quite done to deserve such generous treatment I'm sure I don't know.

The various levels scroll smoothly and are dotted with platforms and lava pits *a la Ghost and Goblins*, though it must be said that where you actually can stand and where it looks as if you should be able to stand aren't always that close.

Critters ranging from your bog standard ghosties that just queue up to be knocked down through to immensely annoying jumping rodent things all too eager to knock you off your perch litter the caverns, making movement a bit, well, 'hellish'. Hitting any of monsters can not only knock you into the soup and so waste one of your eight lives, but also saps your energy.

Luckily bibles appear to build up your energy, and after bouncing through a



▲ *The grey critter on the left is "Satan's gopher"(?)*

HOT SHOT

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/COMMODORE 64/AMSTRAD/ATARI ST/AMIGA/IBM.
► SUPPLIER: PRISM.
► PRICE: £8.99/SPECTRUM CASS £9.99 C64/AMS CASS £12.99 SPEC/C64/AMS.
► VERSIONS TESTED: COMMODORE 64.
► REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.

I'm all for original and innovative ideas – if the end result is an enjoyable and playable game. *Hotshot* is certainly original, but unfortunately it's far from playable.

As Garry Williams, C+VG's lardy lump of an ad manager, says after lunch: "Let me axpand further."

The game is very simple: it's a one-on-one battle between either two human players, or a human and computer player, set across five different levels. The objective is simple: beat the opponent.

Before a game begins, each player enters his name and is assigned a character by the computer. Personally I'd prefer to choose my own character, rather than be given one randomly.

The characters vary in shape and size, from roughly human shape to squat alien life form, but in play there are very few noticeable differences between them.

If there isn't a second human player, the computer supplies an opponent.

Level one looks very much like a *Breakout* game, as there's a large group of blocks at the top of the screen. The bottom of the screen is split into two halves, representing each character's playing area. A ball of antimatter is shot into the playing area, and the characters attempt to catch it and shoot it at the blocks, which earns points.

This sounds pretty straightforward but there are two catches. Firstly, the players are only allowed to catch the ball using their 'gravitation guns' – long sticks. If the ball touches any other part of the character's body, he dissolves and points are given to the opposing player. Secondly, each character exerts a strange gravity force, which causes the ball to follow parabolic curves, making it very difficult to actually catch the ball.

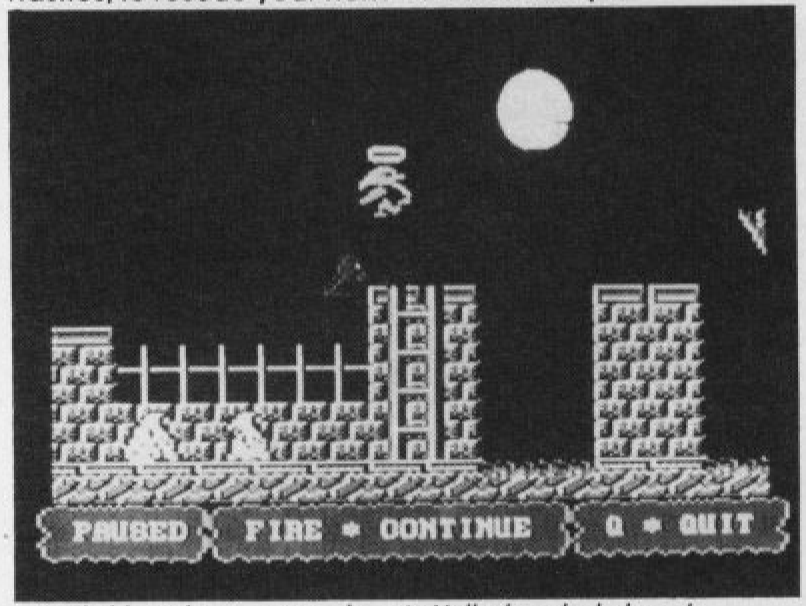
The screen is played over a given period of time. When the clock runs down,



▲ *Nice wall, shame about the spacesuit.*

D BACK

level with angel-like ease, Bertram, for such is his name, gets to recover one of the Commandments. Last of all you face the devil himself, protected by wolves, snakes and other nasties, to rescue your horn - whatever that may be - which has also gone missing. Though the sprites are all quite blocky and dull and hardly animated at all, the general feel of the game isn't too bad with the backdrops



▲ *Chubby ad-manager ends up in Hell where he belongs!*

occasionally looking reasonably pretty and suitably sombre. There is generally no problem with the flat-ground moments in the game, where the tubby one's halo proves fairly devastating weapon, but the main difficulty in the game comes in the jumping moments, when the rodent things mentioned earlier - apparently meant to be gophers! – knock you off with monotonous regularity.

There is a fairly boppy theme tune accompanying the proceedings, and quite a generous provision of lives allowing you to get futher into it than you would at first imagine, but despite the fact that it isn't unplayable, it is hard to recommend such a generally lacklustre copy of an already much imitated game.

On the B-side, if you will, CRL has presented us with a game totally unmentioned on packaging cassette or press release: it is *Moon Crystals*, Andy Jarvis' first game ever. A very simple, very blocky and very old looking thing in the Moon Lander mould. Imagine guiding your *Oids* spaceship through some tunnels while squinting your eyes and you've got it. Still, whatever its shortcomings, which are hardly surpising considering its age, it's a nice idea to present a freebie like this and it certainly helps to make *To Hell and Back* look good.

► GRAPHICS	5
► SOUND	5
► PLAYABILITY	6
► VALUE	4
► OVERALL	5

UPDATE . . .

CRL have no plans at current to bring _To Hell and Back_ to any other formats, which is in line with much of their recent releases. If they did, they would certainly have to charge less than the full price they are flogging the Commodore at to make it anything like a "good buy".

HOT SHOT

both players go forward one at a time to tackle a pinball-style bonus screen. The character stands at the bottom of the screen and the ball ricochets around the screen. The objective is to score as many points as possible by shooting the pins in the centre of the screen. When the time limit expires, or the character gets hit by the ball, the bonus screen ends.

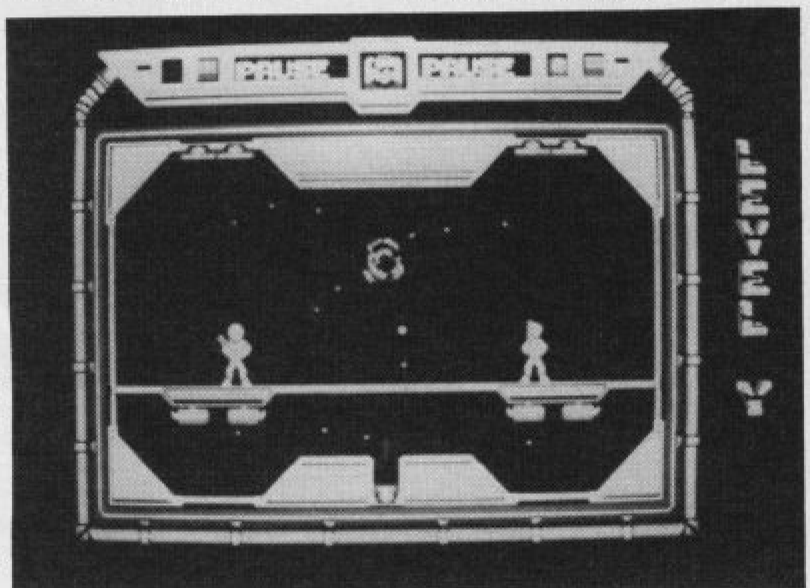
If the player has scored more than 4,000 points, he moves onto the next level. If not, the game ends.

Subsequent levels play very similarly, but involve such things as drowning your opponent by hitting enough bricks to raise the water level in his area, and doing a similar sort of thing with a black hole.

One of the game's big faults is the control method. Catching the ball is incredibly difficult due to the fiddly control method and weird gravity. The computer opponent is also very tough to beat, and frustration sets in very quickly.

Now, all this would be alright if the game was worth persevering with, but unfortunately it isn't. The gameplay just isn't exciting – even in two-player mode – and frustration soon gives way to boredom. Even if you do stick with it, there's only five levels of very similar action.

The graphics are very poor indeed, and look as though they've been copied directly from the Spectrum version.



▲ *This'll never make the next Olympics.*

To be perfectly honest, I don't think *Hotshot* would make the grade even as a budget game. At ten pounds it's vastly overpriced. Avoid it at all costs.

► GRAPHICS	2
► SOUND	1
► VALUE	1
► PLAYABILITY	2
► OVERALL	1

UPDATE . . .

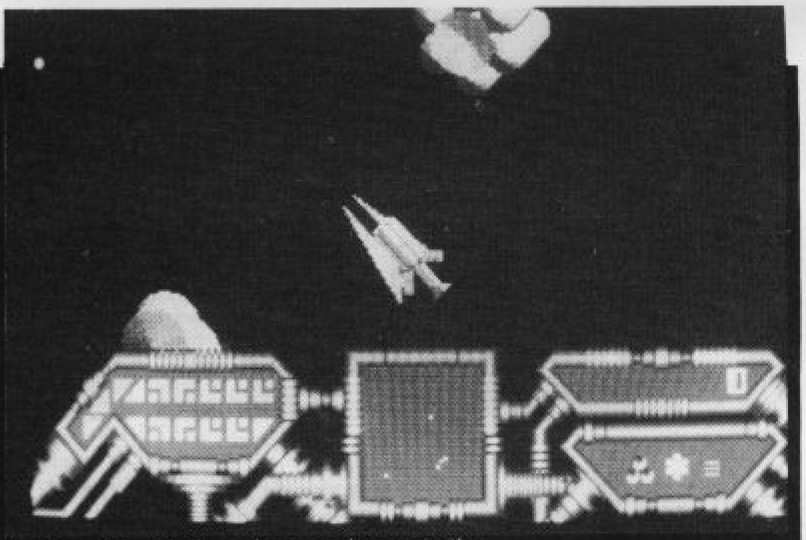
The Spectrum version is unsurprisingly identical to the Commodore, and should be available around now – if you're interested.

16-bit versions have improved graphics, but unfortunately the basic gameplay is the same as the 8-bit versions – so they're not really worth waiting for.

Reviews

WHIRLIGIG

► MACHINES: ATARI ST/AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD.
► PRICES: ST AND AMIGA £19.95.
► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: GARY WHITTA.

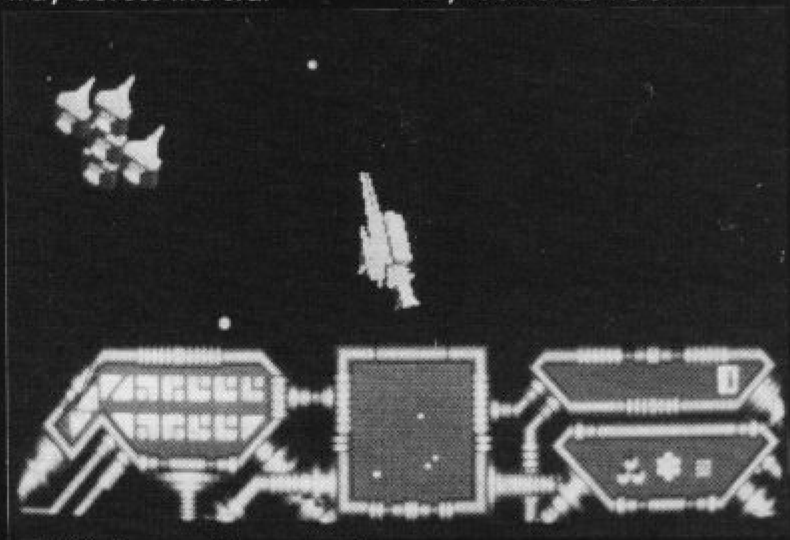


▲ *Careful with those heat seeking missiles.*

Whirligig the game is set far in the future, casting you in the role of a lone starfighter pilot whose mission is to fly around a strange surreal universe (known as Whirligig) in order to collect five perfect solids that are drifting about in the void. Although there are only five solids to find, each one could be in any of 4 BILLION (!!!) levels (called 'Eigenspaces'), so obviously some serious searching is going to have to be done. Relax though – you don't actually have to go to all of them. That would take until eternity.

You view your ship from outside as it flies about the Whirligig on its quest for solids (or should I say 'pitches and rolls all over the place on it's quest for solids' as the mouse control is infuriatingly difficult to use).

As your ship makes its way across the star systems, it will inexorably encounter the many objects, both friendly and hostile, that feature in the game. Depots are some of the most useful, and are used to replenish your ship's supplies. What supplies? Oh, I almost forgot. Your ship, a Meson Class Fighter, is equipped with some rather useful weapons, namely missiles and chaff. Missiles are used to destroy the nasties that appear in the game (more on that later) and since they are heat-seekers, they lock on to their target with frightening accuracy and hardly ever miss. However, should you be so trigger happy as to fire a missile with no enemies on screen, you're in for a fright as they lock onto YOU! In addition, chaff pods are defensive drones used to destroy enemies, or any missiles they may have fired at you.



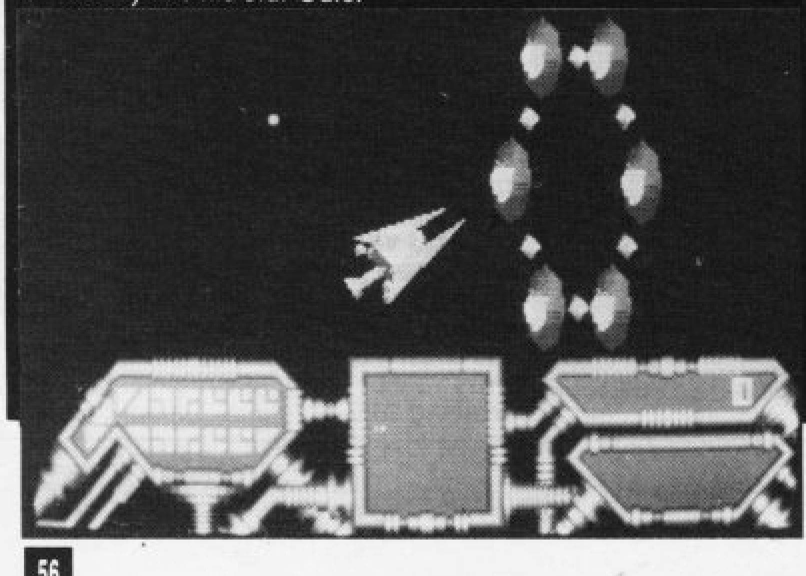
▲ *Weird game with great music.*

Anyway, the depots I mentioned earlier float around in space and can be used to re-chaff and re-arm, depending on what kind of depot it is. Refueling depots are slightly more important, as if you run out of fuel, you're dead!

Travelling from one Eigenspace to another is achieved by travelling through Stargates, strange swirly rings that need some practice to get through safely. Each Stargate will only transport you to one other Eigenspace, and that destination is indicated on the region map on view at the beginning of every level. By travelling from sector to sector in this manner, you will eventually stumble across one of the five 'perfect' in the game, each one housing one of the solids you're after. When you do find a solid, you can use its attractor field to put it in tow (after dealing with the nasty that accompanies each one) and by dragging it back through a stargate you can capture it. Capture all five and you've won the game.

As far as I can see, *Whirligig* is very similar to *Virus* insofar as the pig of a control mode will have you tearing your hair out for a while, but once you've got the hang of it, you'll find an absorbing game there. With an alleged 4 billion levels and over 100 billion nasties you could be at it for quite a while. The game posesses some lovely 3D filled in graphics, both well animated and defined, but not as impressive as its stablemates, *Carrier Command* and *Virus*.

▼ *Steady into the Star Gate.*



► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	6

UPDATE . . .

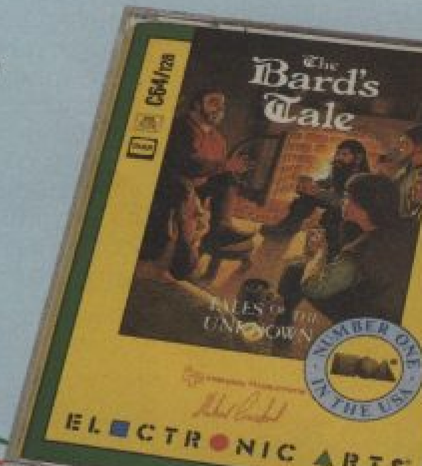
ST and Amiga versions will be on sale in early September. Spectrum, Commodore, Amstrad, and PC versions will follow later in the Autumn – but probably not before mid October at the earliest.

Three generations of pure magic...

BARD'S I

Tales of the Unknown.

"... If you are looking for a real challenge, a real fantasy quest and a brilliant game to boot, it does not get better than this."
POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY.



Out now on the C-64 Cassette, Spectrum and Amstrad and also available on the Amiga, Atari ST, C-64 Disk and IBM PC and compatibles.



C64 cassette screen shot

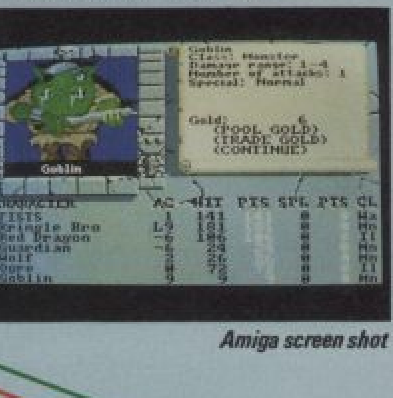
BARD'S II

The Destiny Knight.

"... An excellent game that will require hundred's of hours playing... Bard's Tale II is still one of the three best role playing systems currently available."
YOUR COMMODORE.



"NEW" for the Amiga and also available on the C-64 Disk.



Amiga screen shot

NEW

BARD'S III

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- *A starter dungeon for beginners.*
- *Automap feature and enhanced Save Game without penalty.*
- *Over 100 spells and 500 monsters. 84 dungeon levels spread over 7 dimensions.*
- *7 kinds of spellcasters, including Chronomancers and Geomancers.*



"NEW" for the C-64 Disk.



Commodore screen shot

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ROAD BL

Reviews

► MACHINES: 64, SPECTRUM, AMIGA ST, AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICES: 64 £9.99 CASS £14.99 DISK, AMSTRAD £9.99, £14.99, SPECTRUM CASS £8.99, AMIGA £24.99, ST £19.99.
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.

Road Blasters blends together the two most popular features of video gaming ever invented – driving fast and shooting things.

Just think of the dozens of shooting and driving games that have been launched over the years. They are far too numerous to list here.

What is strange is that it took until 1987 for some bright spark at Atari Games to put two and two together and come up with the hybrid 'racer-shooter' that is *Road Blasters.*

The game was a smash in the arcades – a fact not missed by US Gold who wielded their mighty cheque book to snap up the rights to the home versions.

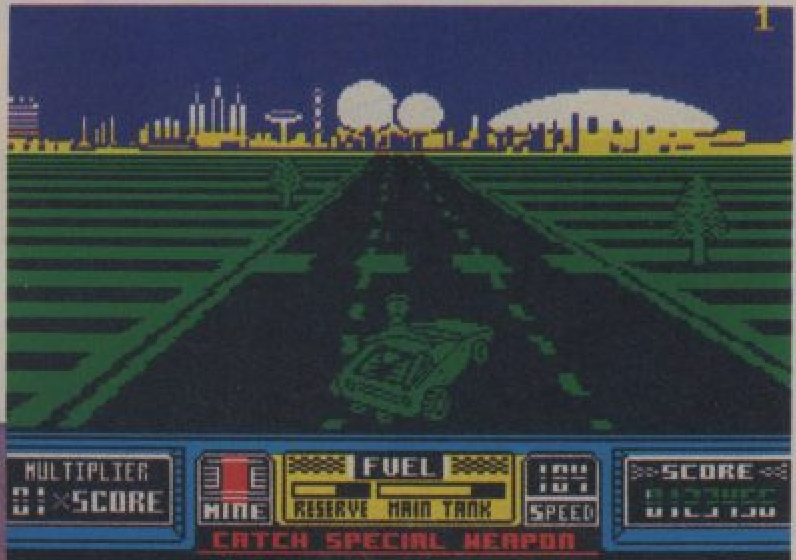
Set sometime in the future where the motorways have become a death dealing nightmare. If you thought the M25 was hairy then forget it. With mines, lay bye mounted machine gun installations, mad bikers, and other crazed roadsters, *Road Blasters* is a game where only the tough will survive.

The secret of *Road Blasters* is to make a successful rendezvous with the passing jet fighter that hovers above the road and drops extra weapons to soup up your vehicle.

Catching these weapons is not easy – you have to line your car up with the plane whilst keeping an eye on the twisting road.

Different types of weapons can be caught. There is a turbo charger that you use to accelerate at great speed enabling you to reach the end of the level more quickly. A bit of a mixed blessing this though as it makes steering more tricky and increases the chances of collisions with other vehicles or coming off the road.

My favourite weapon is the machine gun – which can be operated by pulling back on the joystick. This wastes the enemy like nobody's business – and does so to a splendid, loud 'n quick, machine gun sound. Sound effects are generally excellent in this 64 rendition of *Road Blasters* – especially the explosions when you take out one of the pill boxes. They are hard to hit and one of your most deadly hazards so the loud resounding boom when you take one out is particularly satisfying.



▲ *Prince would love the purple sky in the Speccy version.*

If the other cars don't get you then running out of fuel most definitely will unless you are careful to pick up the green and red fuel balls that are scattered around the road at various points.

The basic aim of *Road Blasters* is simply to drive and survive, and get as far as you can. There are fifty levels in total – though you don't have to start at the first every time as there is an option to start further in the game if you so wish.

The road leads through a series of countries with alternating checkpoints and rally points. The checkpoints are midway goals to aim for with the promise of extra fuel. Rally points are similar to the finish lines in ordinary races – a chequered section of road denoting the end of a level.



▲ *Sun sets as the Road Blasters car prepares for battle.*

.ASTERS

A control dash at the foot of the screen shows your fuel level, speed, warns of incoming mines and displays your multiplier status. The multiplier works by counting the number of yellow cars and bikers you blast.

The aim is to hit as many as possible without missing – this will give you a maximum multiplier of your score at the end of the level.

Road Blasters is very much a high score game. One to boast about once you get your performance at the top of the pile.

The 64 version reviewed here was coded by the same team that produced the Commodore version of *Out Run* – father and son team Amazing Productions. So just how amazing is *Road Blasters?*

The first thing you notice is the graphics and it has to be said these are far from amazing.



▲ Road Blasters car armed with missile launcher.



▲ Hug the centre lane for a crash free ride.

The back drops range from futuristic city scapes to the unbiquitous desert. All three resembled an early attempt at landscaping on the Atari VCS – rather the Commodore 64.

The cars and planes are also pretty basic – lacking in detail and moving very blockily towards you as the road scrolls.

The colours are very stark – completely lacking in shading which makes it difficult to take seriously.

By far the major fault with the game however is its lack of speed. The car just doesn't create a sensation of speed. Only when you pick up the turbo charger does it move convincingly. From a standing start you have to reach about 60 mph before you can discern that the car is moving at all.

Steering also leaves a little to be desired. On some of the early levels the road actually moves for you. You simply stay in the centre of the road, don't touch your joystick at all, and you end up at the end of the level. All you have to do is blast the odd car that gets in your way.

Of course there is no point whatever in doing this as you won't amass any significant number of points. But that is not the point – you shouldn't be able to get away with it. The coin-op certainly won't let you.

Graphics and animation gripes aside – the basic addictive element of *Road Blasters* is still here in this conversion. The strength of the original Atari game design shines through – and I did find the game very difficult to put down.

However, you can't help wishing that US Gold had entrusted the conversion of this excellent coin-op to a better programming team. The truth is that both *Out Run* and now *Road Blasters* have to be ranked as fairly average conversions.

Both games deserved a lot better.

► GRAPHICS	4
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	6
► OVERALL	5

UPDATE . . .

By the time you read this the Spectrum and Amstrad versions will be on sale.

Amiga and ST versions are being coded by Probe in London. They are not expected to hit the shops until the end of August.


G I HERO
R. PEARSE

Reviews

FIRE AND FORGET

► **MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C 64/AMSTRAD/AMIGA/ ATARI ST.**
► **SUPPLIER: TITUS.**
► **VERSIONS TESTED: ATARI ST/AMIGA.**
► **REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.**

The evil and powerful Inter-galactic liberation Organisation has invaded the earth. They have razed several cities to the ground and are holding many others hostage. It seems they intend to destroy the Earth as we know it. Things are looking very grim.

But hark! Could that distant gunfire be the sound of an approaching hero? Indeed it is, and just in the nick of time.

Driving the Thunder-Master, the newest and most powerful land fighting machine , the hero must take on the entire IGLO forces single handedly and banish banish them to whence they came. This is the cue for some colouful and noisy *Roadblasters* type action.

The action is viewed from behind the Thundermaster as it zooms down the road. At the top of the screen is a numeric speed indicator, current score, level indicator and a large fuel gauge, which gradually ticks down as the battle car zooms along.

The action is set over six levels, which represent different parts of the world. The objective is to race along the road,blasting anything and everything, and pass the checkpoint at the end before the TM's fuel runs out.

Extra fuel can be picked up en-route by running over blue and green cones that are scattered thoughout the level.

Every step of the way is frought with danger, and enemy helicopters approach at speed. Fortunately the Thundermaster is armed with the latest laser guns, and can destroy an enemy craft with one single hit. However, the enemy reciprocate and a well-aimed blast from the enemy craft sees the TM explode in colourful clouds of debris. The player has an unlimited supply of TMs, but death results in a loss of fuel.

There are also mines and other hazards littered around the roadways that are either avoided, or blasted out of the way.

When the end of the level is reached, bonus points are awarded, and a map of the remaining locations is shown, allowing the player to choose the next area of play.

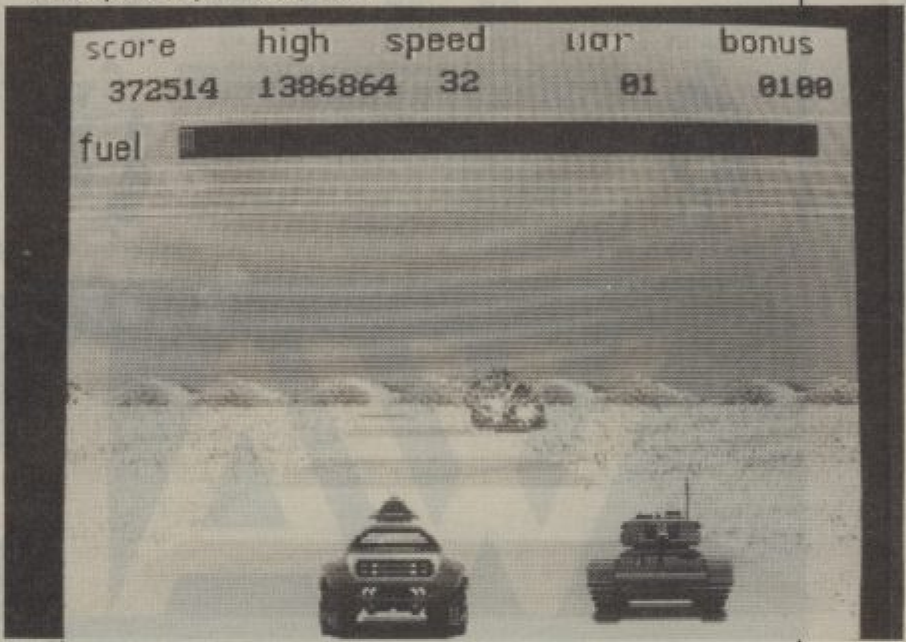
Looking at the screen shots, you might be led to believe that *Fire and Forget* is graphically stunning. Sadly, this isn't the case, since all impact is lost when the game is in motion.

The sprite update is fast, but very jerky, and objects seem to appear out of nowhere. Other highly annoying factors are the lines on the road – they don't scroll down the screen as might be expected, but just change colour. This would be alright if there was a variety of shades, but since there are only two, the effect is pathetic and gives no sense of motion whatsoever – if it wasn't for the occasional roadside object jerking by, you'd think the TM was static!

All this would be forgiven if *Fire and Forget* was fun to play – but unfortunately it isn't. The sheer speed of the game makes it very difficult to react to oncoming hazards, so you end up sitting in the middle of the road pressing the fire button like crazy and attempting to run over the occasional fuel cone. Since this tactic allows you to go all the way through to the end, the game's appeal is very short-lived indeed.



▲ *Don't let the graphics deceive you!*



▲ *The animation in the game is jerky.*

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	6
► PLAYABILITY	3
► VALUE	2
► OVERALL	3

UPDATE . . .

Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore versions won't be appearing for a month or two, but will apparently play very similarly to their 16-bit counterparts.

The IBM PC version should be avialable by the time you read this.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

OVERLANDER

► **MACHINES: SPEC/C64/ AMSTRAD/ATARI ST/AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELITE.**
► **PRICE: SPEC £7.99 CASS, C64/AMS £9.99 CASS, SPEC £12.99 DISK, C64/AMS £14.99 DISK, ATARI ST £19.99, AMIGA £24.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.**
► **REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.**

A trio of *Roadblasters* games has arrived at the office this month: US Gold's disappointing officially licensed,Titus' awful *Fire and Forget* and *Overlander*, the best of the three.

At the start of a game, one of two missions is chosen – one is more difficult than the other, and is therefore worth more money. Half the cash is given when the mission is completed. Extra money is earned by shooting other road users, which include cars, motorbikes and large 4x4 trucks.

Overlander certainly has more depth than the other two *Roadblasters* games. I particularly like the way the game has been designed so that the better you play, the more equipment you can buy. The choice of two missions is also a good idea, effectively giving two different levels.

The one thing I don't like is that you have lives – I prefer to rely on keeping fuel levels up to keep me in the game, rather than be dumped out of it because I've crashed six times. Still, it does make the game more challenging I suppose.

The graphics are colourful and slick, and the 3D effect gives a convincing impression of speed. The update is smooth and the hills are very realistic. The car sprite is a little on the weak side, but everything else is nicely drawn and detailed.

Although the game is playable, I think the difficulty level is set a little too high, which may be offputting to some.It takes a lot of practise just to finish one mission, and frustration levels are pushed to their limits as you try time and time again to get to the checkpoint.

Despite the excessive difficulty, *Overlander* is challenging and addictive. The gameplay varies little from level to level, but I don't think that'll stop psychopathic racers thoroughly enjoying the action.

Go for it – if you think you can stand the pace . . .



▲ *Road blasting in Overlander.*



▲ *The Overlander launches firebombs at a 4x4.*

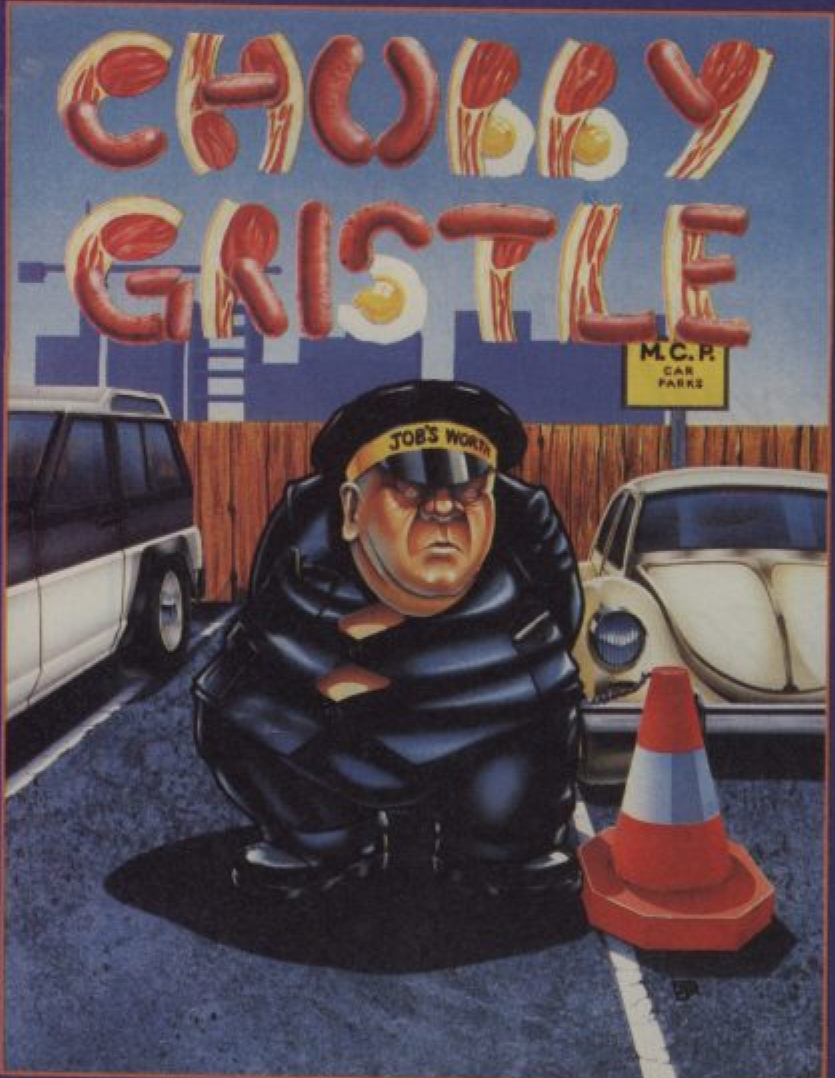
► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► PLAYABILITY	8
► VALUE	6
► OVERALL	7

UPDATE . . .

Amiga, Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore 64 versions will all be available shortly, and are sounding very promising indeed.



Commodore screen shots shown.



CHUBBY GRISTLE IS PROBABLY THE FATTEST AND MOST OBNOXIOUS CAR PARK ATTENDANT YOU'LL EVER COME ACROSS!
A CLASSICAL PLATFORM GAME WITH DANGER AT EVERY TURN.

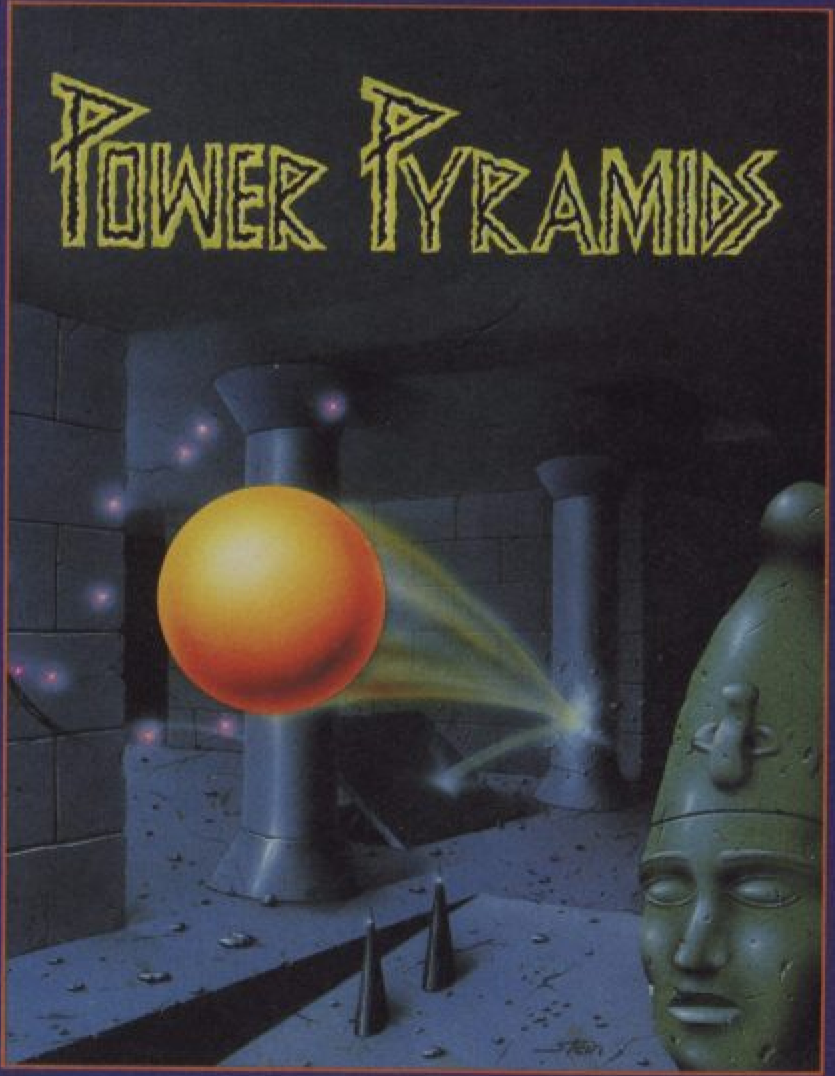
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Screenshots taken from Commodore

DELIVERY OF THE 4 PYRAMIDS IS EASY BUT ACTIVATING THEM BEFORE YOU HAND THEM OVER IS A DIFFERENT MATTER!
IN THIS ARCADE ADVENTURE, GUIDE YOUR ROBOTIC SPHEROID AROUND 128 SCREENS OF MIND-BENDINGLY CONVOLUTED LANDSCAPE, AVOIDING THE MANY HIDDEN DANGEROUS OBSTACLES AND ACTIVATE ALL THE POWER POINTS IN THE PYRAMIDS.





Screenshots taken from Spectrum

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C+VG HIT!

Reviews

► **MACHINES: ATARI ST/ AMIGA.**
► **SUPPLIER: ASL.**
► **PRICES: £14.95 ST, £14.95 AMIGA.**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.**
► **REVIEWER: GARY WHITTA.**

HELTER SKELTER

It ain't no fun being a pink ball trapped in a strange alternative dimension inhabited by all manner of dangerous creatures, but that's exactly the predicament you'll find yourself in should you buy *Helter Skelter*, the new release from ASL.

Helter Skelter sure is one strange game, so much so that it's difficult to categorise it. It's not an arcade adventure, and it's certainly not a shoot 'em-up, so what in fact is it?

I'd better explain. You control a lively bouncing ball whose job it is to bounce around various levels bumping off the assorted nasties who roam the platforms and levels that each screen is composed of. But you can't just bounce on any nasty. No siree. You have to kill the right nasties in the correct order, and to help you do this, the specific nasty that you have to squash is indicated by an arrow that appears above his head. By landing on the nasty's head, you cause him to explode, and the next target is indicated, and so on until you clear the screen.

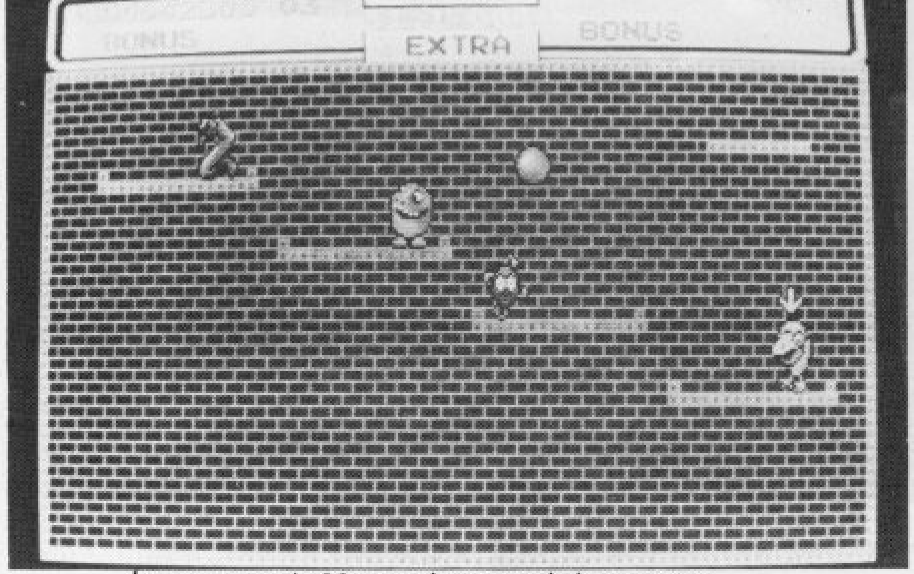
To make things just a bit more difficult, there's a penalty for popping the wrong nasty. Should you do this, either by accident or due to your sado-masochistic tendencies, the nasty splits into two smaller ones, thus enlarging your workload. Keep on being careless and there'll soon be thousands of little nasties gallavanting about the screen!

As if that isn't enough, each level carries a painfully short time limit (typically about 20 seconds each) and if this runs out before you complete the screen, you lose a life and the screen resets, putting back all the nasties. Fortunately power-up capsules appear from time to time offering extra lives and powers if you collect them, but remember, as the time limit is so short, the nasties always have priority.

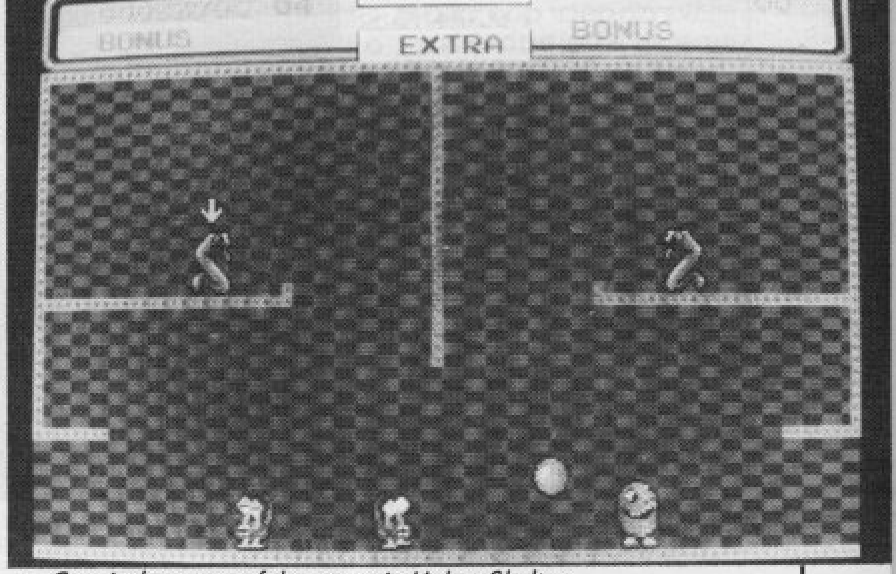
The control of the ball is weird to say the least. "Just imagine you're slapping the ball with your hand", the man said, stifling a giggle, as I bounced around the screen helplessly. After a while, I picked up the control method and was soon gaining passwords to the later screens.

Helter Skelter is a very jolly game indeed.

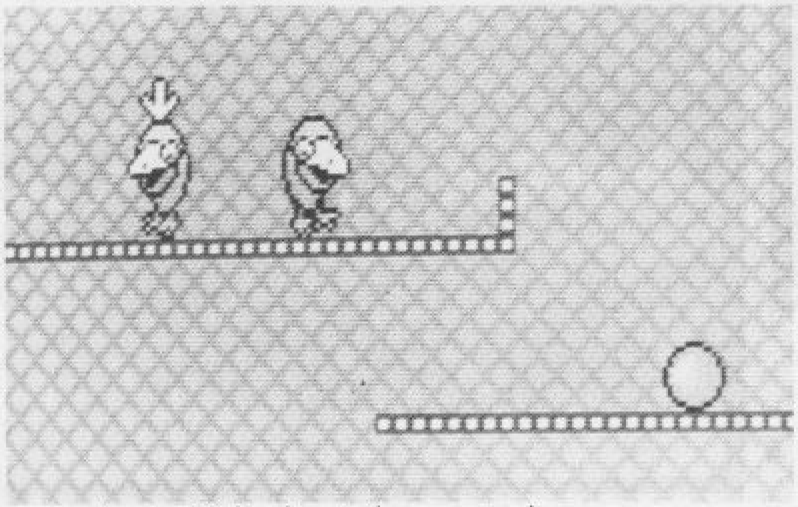
There's certainly enough gameplay to keep gamers at their joysticks/mice for a long time, but you'd better buy a hairnet 'cos by the time you get to the later screens, you'll want to pull most of it out!



▲ *You've only 20 seconds to squash these nasties.*



▲ *Cute is the name of the game in Helter Skelter.*



▲ *You have to kill the aliens in the correct order.*

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	7

UPDATE . . .

Both ST and Amiga versions should be in your local softshop by the time you read this, and a PC version is to follow soon. Sadly no 8-bit versions are on the cards, but ASL haven't ruled it out completely, so hang on in there.

Reviews

ATARI BLAST

The Software division of Atari Corporation has been very quiet over the last few years, with very little in the way of new releases for either their 8 or 16-bit machines. However, this month sees a break in that silence, with no less than ten new titles for ST. Some may sound familiar; others not-so-familiar. Julian Rignall sorts out the wheat from the chaff.

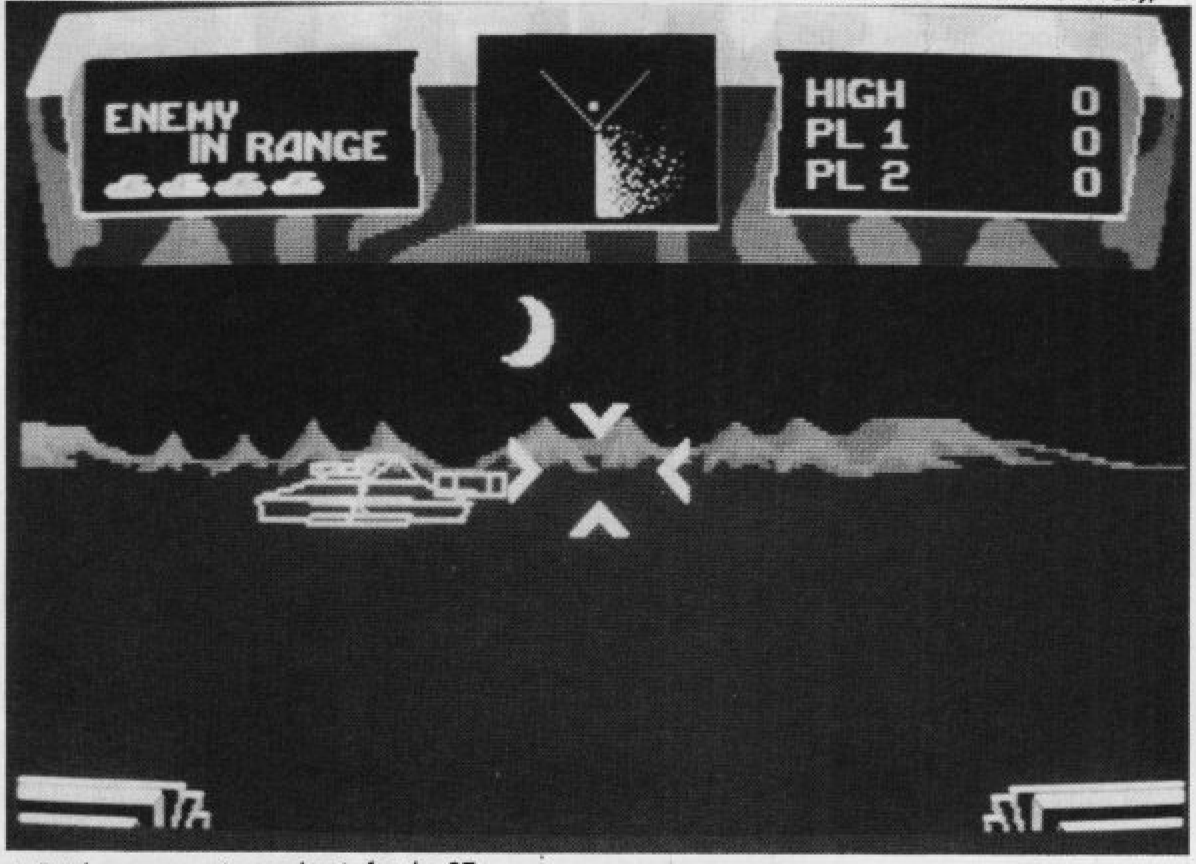
Battlezone

► £14.99

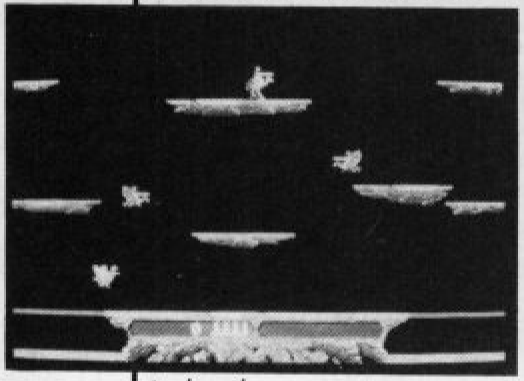
This ancient first-person perspective vector graphic tank game first appeared in the arcades back in 1980. It's a very straightforward combat game in which the player guides a tank across an enemy battlefield. Other tanks appear one at a time, its whereabouts shown on the radar at the top of the screen, and proceeds to track down the player; it's kill or be killed. As the game progresses, fast super tanks appear, along with homing missiles which zig-zag across the playing area in an attempt to crash into the tank.

Although **Battlezone** is a very faithful conversion of the original, its plodding, rather repetitive gameplay looks primitive by today's standards. I can't see it appealing to anyone but the most forgiving game players.

► OVERALL 4



▲ *Battlezone – coin-op classic for the ST.*



▲ *Joust!*



▲ *Moon Patrol: a blast from the past.*

Super Breakout

► £9.99

Arkanoid, Addictaball and *Impact* have all contributed towards the revival of the bat and ball formula. Now that revival is complete with the re-release of Super Breakout, the Grandaddy of them all.

Unfortunately it lacks the sophistication of the newer titles, and only has four different screens. The absence of extra weapons and features is also an annoying point, and it takes very little time, for the action to become repetitive and tiresome.

Either avoid it, or give one of the new breed a shot.

► OVERALL 2

Asteroids Deluxe

► £14.99

The sequel to *Asteroids* (not to be mixed up with the more recent *Blasteroids*), **Asteroids Deluxe,** was never a big arcade hit. Nevertheless, Atari has decided to give it a new lease of life, eight years since it first appeared.

The game involves entering an asteroid field and blasting rocks, which break down twice under fire before finally vapourising. On later levels, Alien Robot Drones drift into the playing area. These split up into individual ships when hit, which home in on the player. Laser firing saucers also enter the fray, making life even more difficult.

I found it difficult to get enthusiastic about this offering due to the sluggish control method.It is fun for a while, but personally I'd wait for Mirrorsoft's conversion of **Blasteroids** - which sould have a lot more depth than this.

► OVERALL 4

FROM THE PAST

Joust

► £14.99

Designed by Eugene Jarvis back in 1982, **Joust** is a cult classic. One or two players fly Ostriches (!) against the evil buzzard lords, attempting to dismount them with their lances, whereupon they turn into eggs which can be collected for extra points. However, wait too long before collecting an egg and it hatches into a faster moving enemy!

All the features of the original arcade game have faithfully been reproduced in this conversion, and both the graphics and sound are spot-on.

Not everyone will enjoy **Joust** – many find the inertial control method difficult to master – but if you enjoy a challange and are into weird games, this one's a must.

► **OVERALL 8**

Xor

► £19.99

Xor appeared on the BBC last year, and was converted onto the Commodore 64 by Logotron, causing hardly a ripple on the 64 scene. Atari's conversion is very similar and retains all the good and bad points of the original.

It's a puzzle game with *Boulderdash* overtones where the player guides two heroes through a maze in the minimum amount of steps. The onus is on puzzle solving, rather than on whizzing through the maze and avoiding the enemy, so the gameplay does tend towards the pedestrian. Still, puzzle fans should enjoy the action - and the fifteen big mazes means that there is plenty to keep you going.

► **OVERALL 7**

Moon Patrol

► £14.99

I was a great **Moon Patrol** fan when the arcade appeared about six years ago, and therefore I looked at this conversion with many a nostalgic thought.

The player drives a moon buggy across a right to left scrolling landscape, blasting everything that moves and leaping rocks and holes in the ground. The action gets pretty frenetic on later levels, with landmines, tanks and flying saucers making life very difficult.

Although it's fun, **Moon Patrol** is dated and offers little more than a few hours entertainment.

► **OVERALL 6**

Crystal Castles

► £14.99

The youngest of Atari's new releases – a mere four years old – casts the player in the role of Bentley Bear on his quest to collect jewels. These are scattered across a series of 3D forced perspective mazes of ladders, ramps and elevators.

Each screen is inhabited by a variety of creatures which maraud around and are fatal to touch – although there is a magic hat which gives temporary invincibility.

Although this conversion is a little rough around the edges, it has all the features and gameplay of the original, and is therefore highly enjoyable. Whether or not it's worth £15 entirely depends on how much you liked the arcade game.

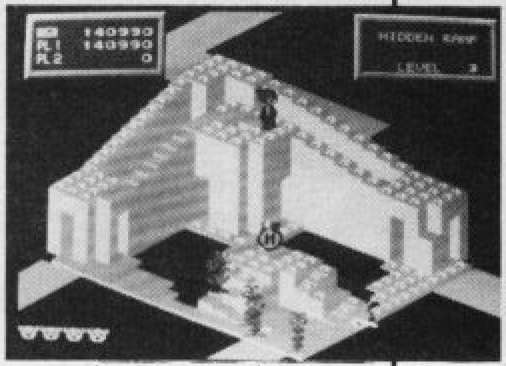
► **OVERALL 7**

Crack'ed

► £14.99

This game's origins are a mystery, but one thing's for sure – it's great fun to play

It's the player's job to defend five nests from marauding birds by shooting them down with a crosshair. If a bird is carrying an egg when it is shot, the egg falls and can be caught using the crosshair and returned to the nest. Later screens are set in a sewer and underwater, and there's also a bonus screen where



▲ *Bentley Bear gets the gems.*

eggs are thrown at a rooster.

Crack'ed is by no means outstanding, but is nevertheless a simple, fun-filled reaction game that'll appeal to a wide range of ST gamers young and old.

► **OVERALL 7**

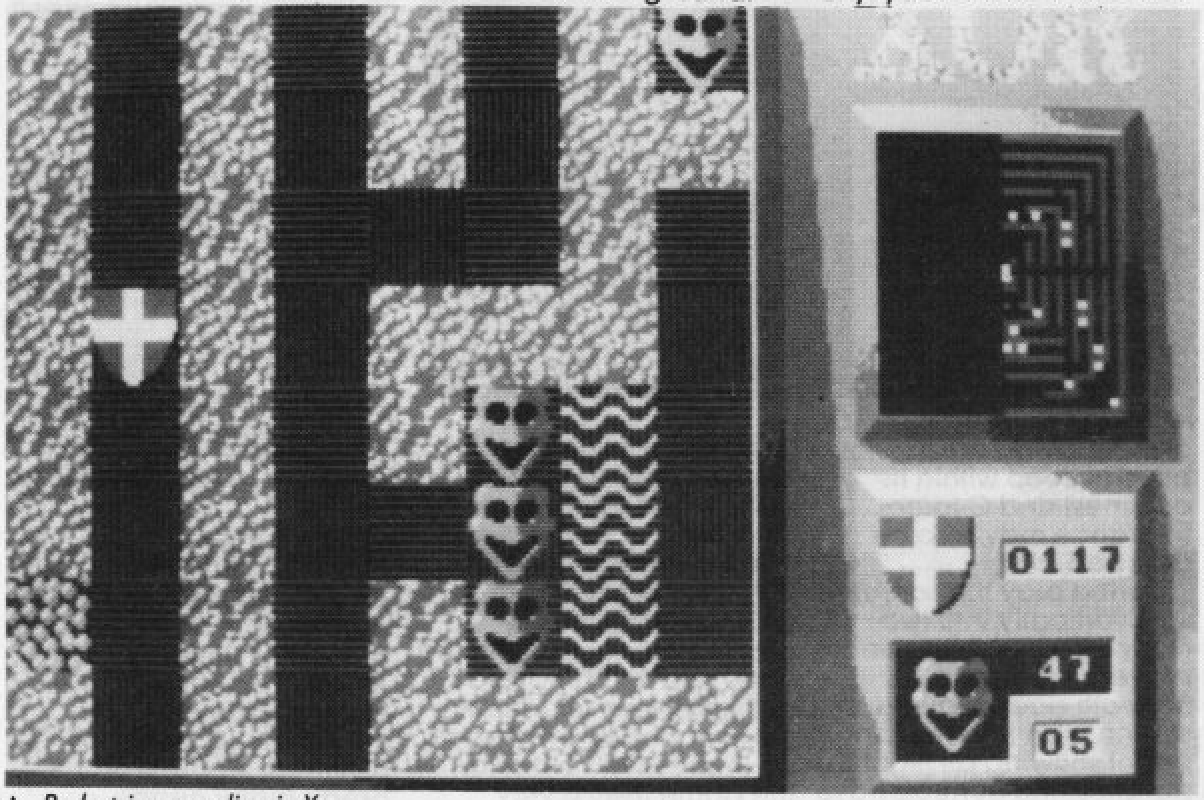
Moon base

► £19.99

The supercomputer controlling earth's defences has gone haywire. The only way it can be fixed is by mining special raw materials from the Moon. The only way this can be done is for one person to fly a solo mission to the moon and bring it back to earth.

Very much *Gravitar*-inspired, **Moon Base** is a difficult but playable game with plenty of scope for long term play. It's a bit pricey, though.

► **OVERALL 7**



▲ *Pedestrian puzzling in Xor.*

Reviews

SKY CHASE

► **MACHINES: AMIGA/ ATARI ST.**
► **SUPPLIER: IMAGEWORKS.**
► **PRICE: AMIGA/ATARI ST £19.99.**
► **VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.**
► **REVIEWER: JULIAN RIGNALL.**

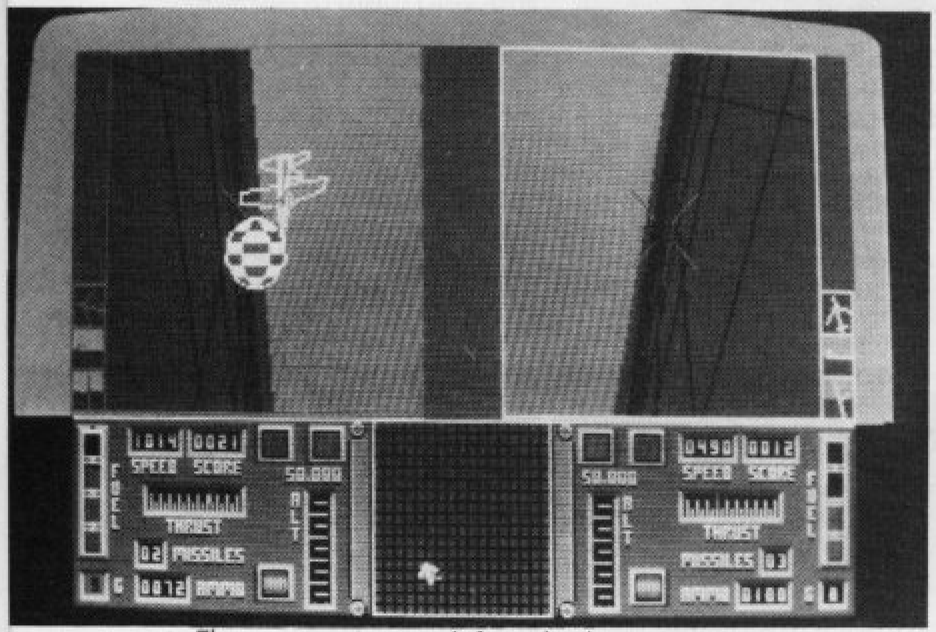
The first title on the Imageworks label (formerly Mirrorsoft) is a one-on-one split screen, vector graphic flight combat simulator. Programmed in the US by Maxis, it gives one or two players the chance to take on the World's hottest fighter planes and fly them in battle against a variety of enemy craft.

At the start of a game, a wealth of options confront the player. One of the most important is the choice of players: two players may fly head-to-head, and there's also a choice of a computer opponent or demo mode. The computer opponent has four levels of difficulty, from easy to ACE.

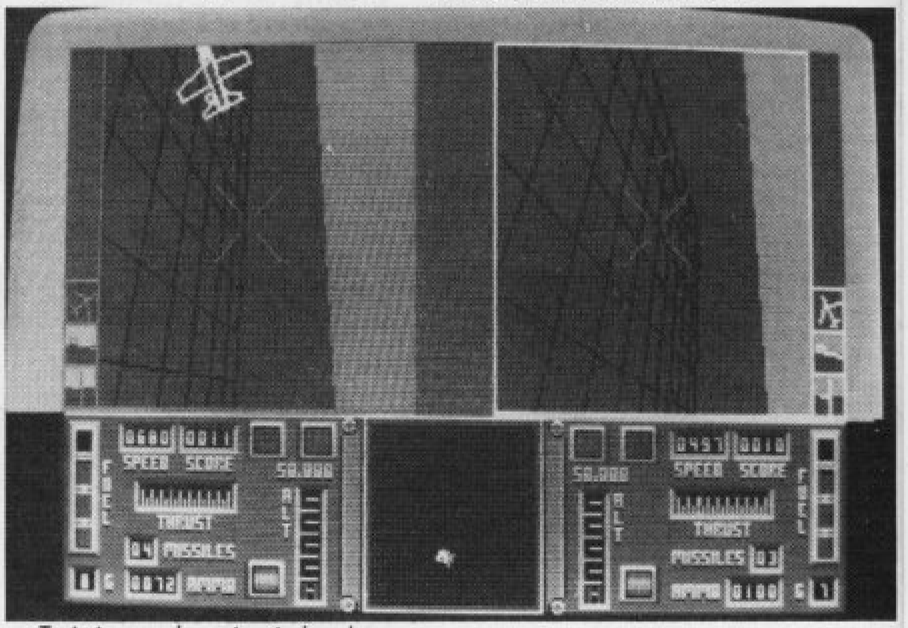
Next, a jet is chosen. There's a wide variety of craft, including a MiG Flogger, F-14, F-16 and F-18 – the programmers have also included a paper plane, which has the best specification of them all!

When each player has chosen a plane, the amount of fuel, bullets and missiles is set. The missile lock threshold (when the targetting system actually locks onto an enemy plane), bullet hit area, size of the playing area (pilots have to keep within its confines) and G-force tolerance may also be adjusted.

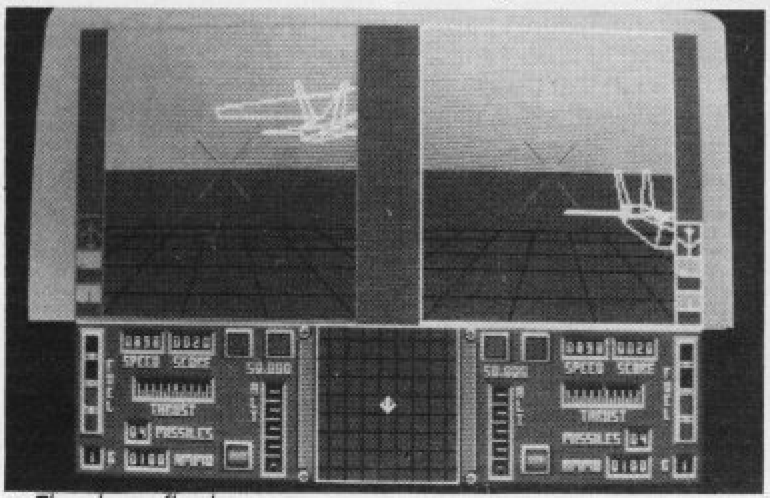
During play the screen is split vertically into two halves, representing each players' viewpoint. Beneath each players' screen is an information panel showing all flight statistics. The controls have been deliberately simplified to allow players to concentrate on combat. Both players start in the air, facing one another, and simply dogfight until one is destroyed by being shot down, flying out of the playing area, flying too high, or running out of fuel.



▲ *The computer is seconds from death.*



▲ *Twisting and turning in battle.*



▲ *The planes fly close.*

Missiles or bullets are launched using the fire button, and thrust is increased or decreased using the keyboard.

Points are scored whenever the enemy plane is destroyed, and the objective is to simply outscore your opponent.

Although *Sky Chase* has an impressive front end, the game itself is very simplistic, and plays similarly to Ocean's failed *Top Gun* Licence; it pales in comparison with Cascade's *Ace II*. There's little difference between the planes, and the gameplay is very repetitive.

A very major flaw is the computer opponent – it's pathetic. The easy level is a pushover . . . and so is *Ace!* Its tactics never vary, and it soon becomes very predictable.

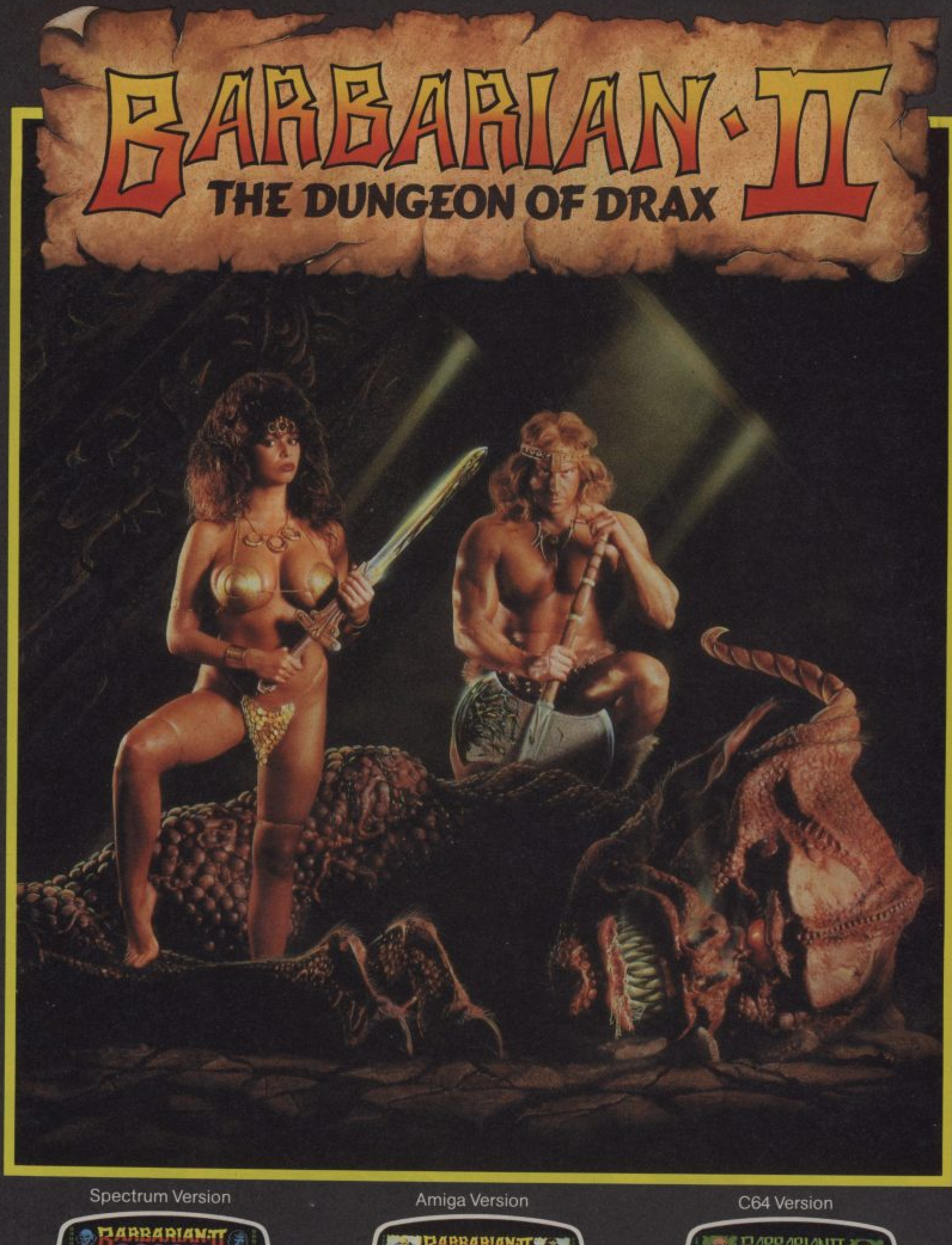
The potential for a brilliant 16-bit combat simulator is there, but unfortunately *Sky Chase* hasn't realised it.

► GRAPHICS	5
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	1
► PLAYABILITY	2
► OVERALL	3

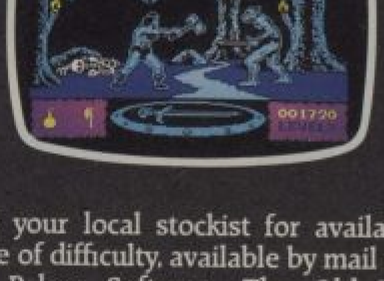
UPDATE . . .

An Atari ST version will be available shortly, and will play very similarly to the Amiga version – unfortunately.

No 8-bit versions are planned, which won't break many hearts.



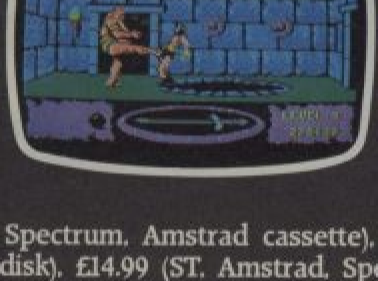
Spectrum Version



Amiga Version



C64 Version



Check your local stockist for availability. In case of difficulty, available by mail order from: Palace Software, The Old Forge, 7 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX. Send cheque or postal order for £9.99 (C64, Spectrum, Amstrad cassette), £12.99 (C64 disk), £14.99 (ST, Amstrad, Spectrum disk), £19.99 (Amiga) plus 80p P&P. Access and Visa holders telephone 01-278 0751. Subject to availability.

PALACE

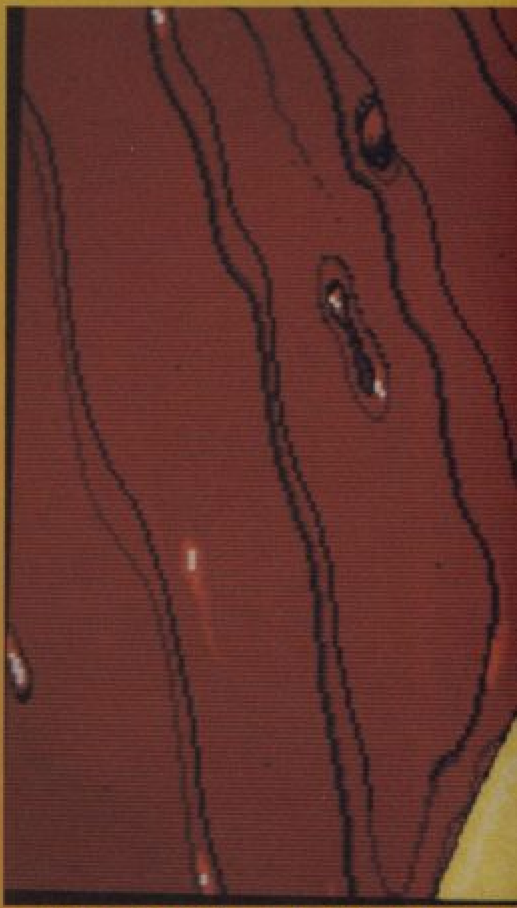
FRAME UP

Once again budding computer artists are flung into the limelight as *C + VG* displays the best of this month's digital pictures.

Featured this month are *Dave Watterson* from Oldham, *Gary Marshall* of Swanwick, purveyor of Amstrad pictures of Indiana Jones and Steel Madness, *Paul Blakemore* from Rainham, another Amstrad artist, *Sigbjorn Vagenes* of 4270 Akrehamn, Norway who drew Watchmen, Forearm Thru Head and Gizmo on the Amiga (great, aren't they), *Karl Munchheimer* from Bergede in West Germany, Ian Edwards of Bream, who drew Balls on the Atari ST, and finally the mysterious, yet prolific, *JMA* from London SE19 whose Uncle Sam, Jeckle and Hyde and U2 pictures were drawn are on the ST.



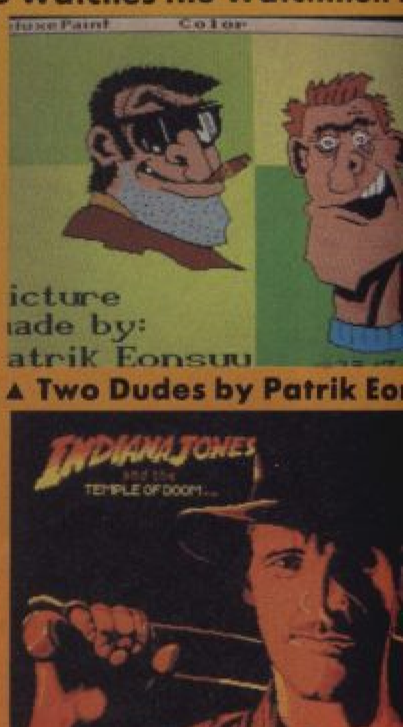
▲ Forearm Thru Head by Sigbjorn Vagenes.



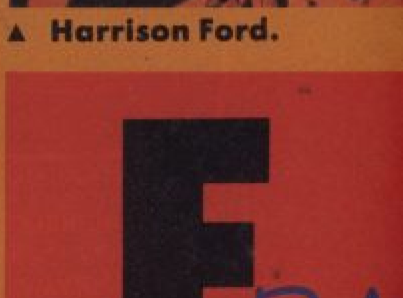
▲ Who Watches the Watchmen



▲ Balls by Ian Edwards.



▲ Two Dudes by Patrik Eo



▲ Harrison Ford.

FRA



▲ U2 by JMA.



▲ JMA'S Uncle Sam.



Sigbjorn Vagenes.



▲ Turbo by D. Watterson.



▲ Jeckle and Hyde by JMA.



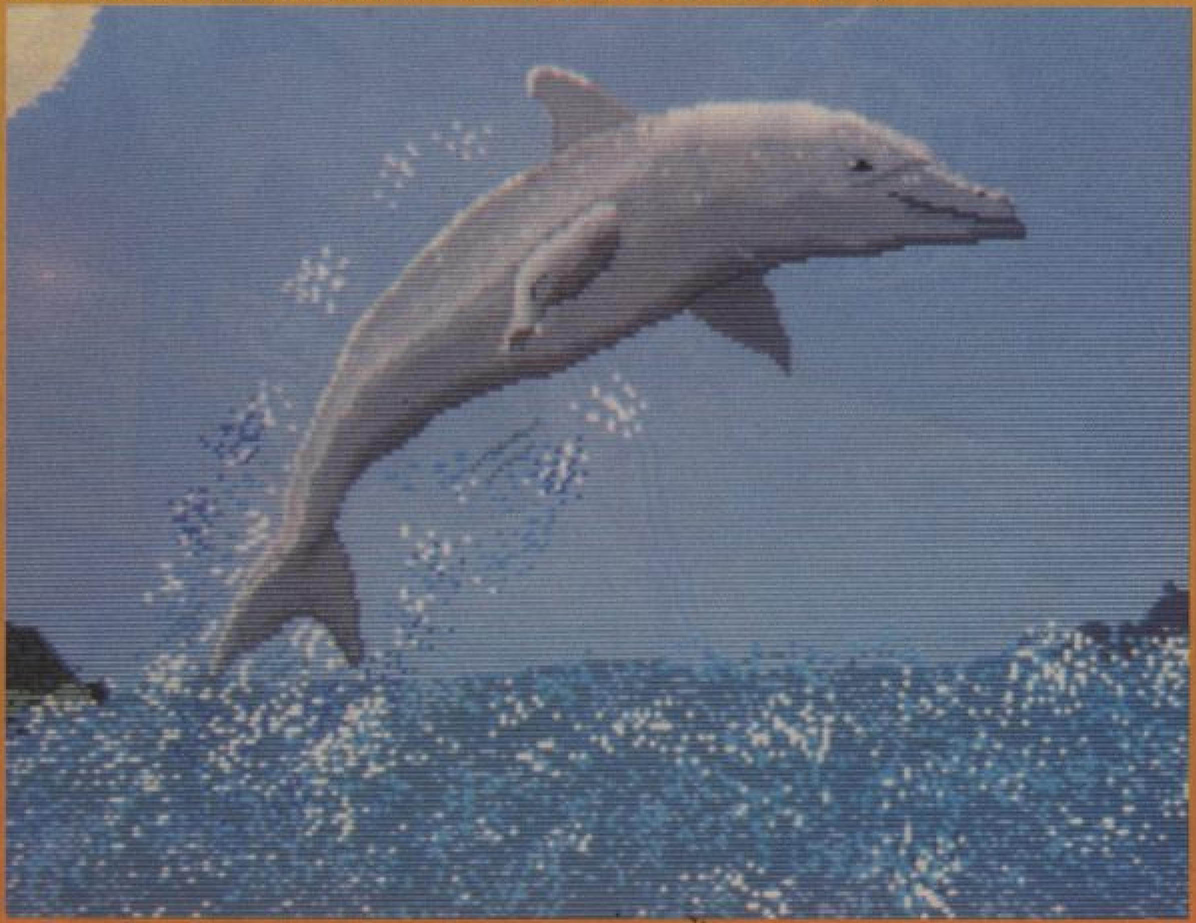
▲ Sigbjorn Vagenes' Gizmo.



▲ Paul Blakemore.

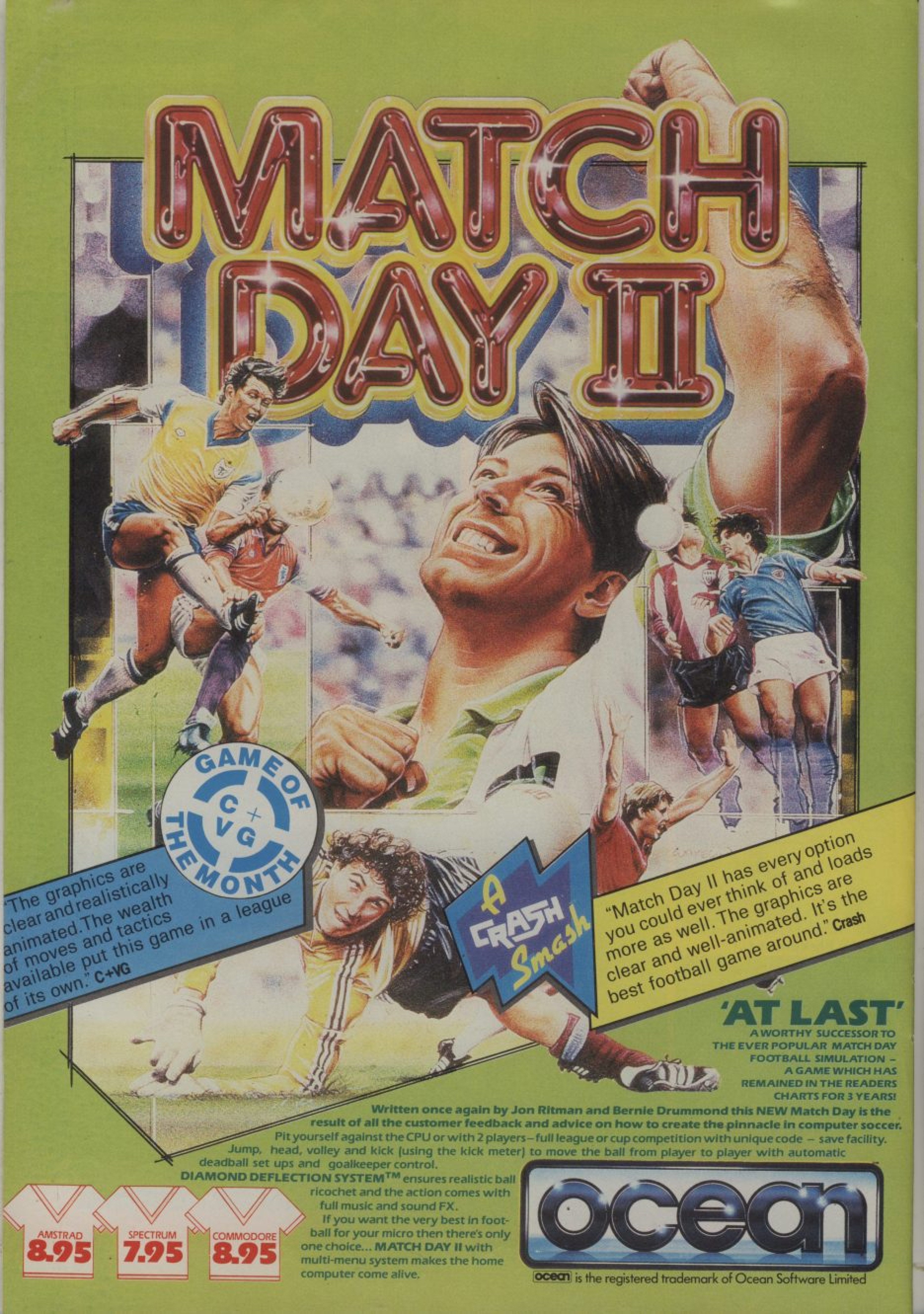


▲ Steel Madness.



▲ Freedom from Ian Edwards.

E U P



MATCH DAY II
GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG
"The graphics are clear and realistically animated. The wealth of moves and tactics available put this game in a league of its own." C+VG
A CRASH Smash
"Match Day II has every option you could ever think of and loads more as well. The graphics are clear and well-animated. It's the best football game around." Crash
'AT LAST'
A WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO THE EVER POPULAR MATCH DAY FOOTBALL SIMULATION – A GAME WHICH HAS REMAINED IN THE READERS CHARTS FOR 3 YEARS!
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Pit yourself against the CPU or with 2 players – full league or cup competition with unique code – save facility.
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DIAMOND DEFLECTION SYSTEM™ ensures realistic ball ricochet and the action comes with full music and sound FX.
If you want the very best in football for your micro then there's only one choice... MATCH DAY II with multi-menu system makes the home computer come alive.
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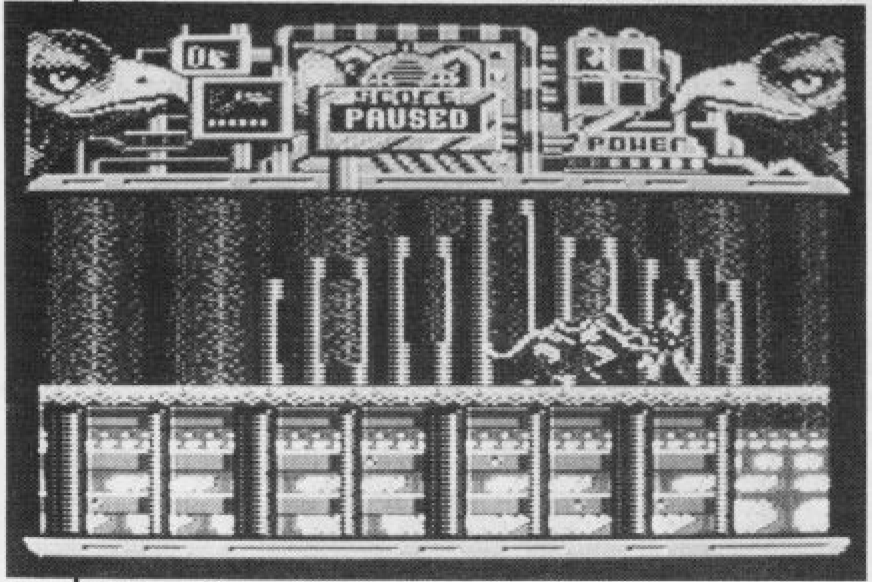
HAWKEYE

- ► **MACHINE: 64, SPECTRUM.**
- ► **SUPPLIER: THALAMUS.**
- ► **PRICE: 64 £9.99 CASS, £12.99 DISK, ST £19.99, SPECTRUM £9.99.**
- ► **VERSIONS TESTED: 64.**
- ► **REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.**

When you hear of a new game from Thalamus coded by a bunch of Swedish hackers known collectively as the Boys Without Brains you can't help but be interested.

Unfortunately this soon starts to wain when you discover that the game in question is no more or less than a scrolling platform number involving a great deal of blasting and picking things up.

Called *Hawkeye*, the game takes its name from



▲ *Huge rhino must be wasted at end of level.*

the two winking hawks at the right and left of the information panel at the top of the play screen. When one of the hawks winks this tells you the direction in which you must run to locate one of the four pieces of a puzzle that you need to enable you to get onto the next level.

These glowing pieces of the puzzle are dotted around the platforms and provide a modicum of interest above and beyond the otherwise tedious business of running, leaping and shooting.

Some games are difficult to play because the puzzles and challenges invented by the designers are cleverly put together others are difficult to play because things just don't work out the way they were intended. *Hawkeye* belongs to the latter category.

The method of jumping illustrates this point in *Hawkeye*. The character does not respond well to the joystick when he attempts to leap chasms and from platform to platform. This is extremely frustrating – interrupting the game play not through any lack of skill on the part of the player but through the inadequacy of the programming.

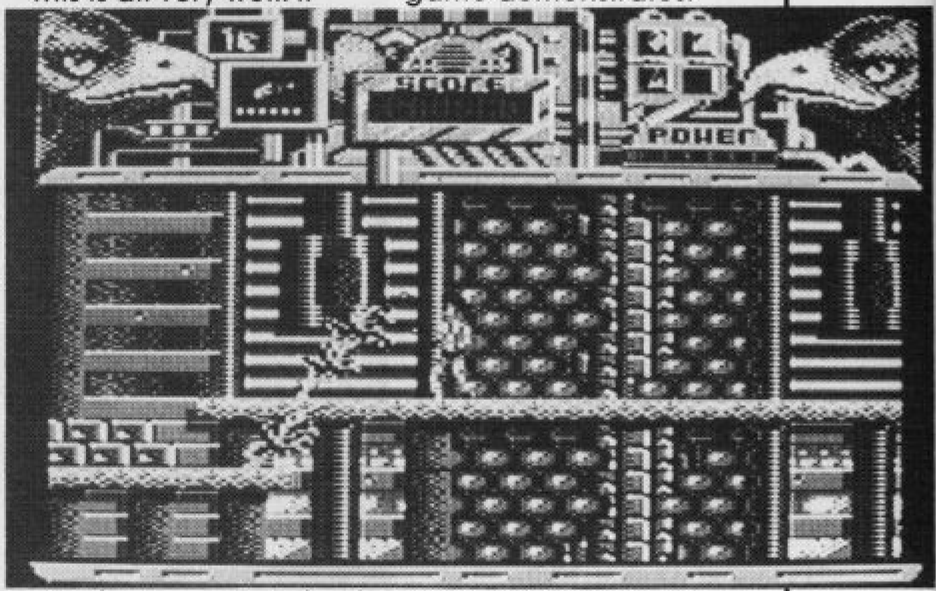
Your hero is armed with four different types of gun – selected by depressing the fire button and moving the joystick to the left. As far as I could tell it makes little difference which one you select as, apart from sound and graphics, they are all pretty similar.

As well as the four pieces of the puzzle there are also other glowing squares to be picked up offering extra energy and fire power.

The nasties are a widely mixed bunch. The first ones you come across are a pair of wimpy looking bouncing ducks. They do improve though with groups of birds flying in formation and a mean looking rhino at the end of level one. But it's not the nasties that make it difficult – it's negotiating the platforms as you try to get to the next level.

Should you succeed in this, your energy is replenished in an animated sequence whilst the next level loads.

This is all very well. It



▲ *Hawkeye – as original as the Grumbleweeds.*

looks great and sounds good too but the trouble is you have seen it all before. It is as about as original as the Grumbleweeds.

The muscle-bound hero of this little escapade bears an uncanny resemblance to just about every other muscle-bound hero featured in countless scrolling, shooting adventures over the last couple of years. I do like his name though – Stavros or 'Stavvy' to his mates. I am reliably informed however that this particular Stavros has no connection with a certain North London restauranteur or an alternative comedian called Harry. No – he is more likely to take his name from a well known Thalamus programmer called Stavros who was last heard of freezing his knackers off on the Russian-Finnish border wearing a uniform of the Swedish army.

I am of course refering to Stavros Fasoulas author of *Delta*, *Sanxion*, and *Quedex*.

I am sure Stavros will be chuffed to learn he has a computer hero named after him – when he thaws out that is. He probably wouldn't be quite so pleased though were he aware of the appalling lack of originality that the game demonstrates.

Admitedly the graphics, sound and presentation are excellent – well up to the high standards that we have come to expect from this *Crash* and *Zzapp* owned software house. It's just that in the playability stakes it leaves me completely cold – just like Stavros.

Rumours emanating from Thalamus tell of a hot new game from Martin Walker – author of Hunters Moon. Keep watching for news of this one.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	4
► PLAYABILITY	3
► OVERALL	3

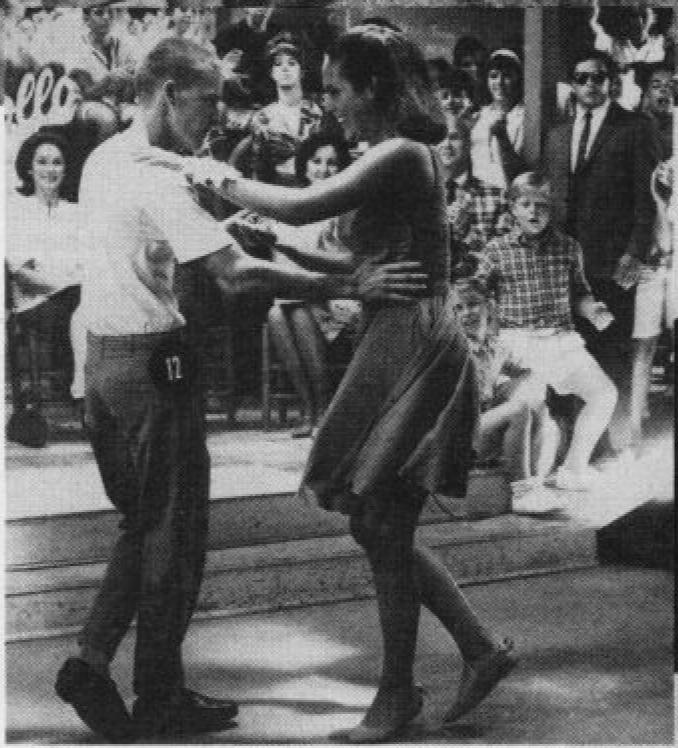
UPDATE . . .

The release schedule for *Hawkeye* has just been finalised. A Spectrum version will be available shortly. ST and Amiga versions will be launched later in the year.

BIG Screen

Summer – sea, sand, sun! But there's no tan for film fan Ward R Street as he checks out the new releases.







▲ *Top – the spooks sit down to dinner in Beetlejuice.* ▲ *Above – Chip and Annabeth show the audience how to shag.*

Fancy a holiday aborad? Then you could follow Eddie Murphy, who's **Coming to America** (15). Eddie is prince Akeem, leading a life of luxury deep in the African jungle. But custom dictates that Akeem's Princess will be chosen for him, which isn't his idea of true love, so he takes off for the US of A in search of a real woman, accompanied by his best friend Semmi (Arsenio Hall).

Akeem and Semmi's 'undercover' arrival is hardly successful – not too many inhabitants of New York wear gold chains and furs – but the local down and outs help our two innocents abroad by relieving them of their luxury luggage. To fully escape the good life, the Africans take jobs as cleaners at a burger joint, which is where Akeem finds his true love ... but can he win her away from her sharp business man boyfriend?

Murphy seemed to walk through his last two films – the carbon-copy *Beverly Hills Cop* 2 and concert film *Raw* – but **Coming to America** shows that Murphy really can act. He actually plays four characters – and I guarantee there's one you won't get until the final credits! Arsenio Hall provides excellent support.

The firm hand behind all this is director John Landis. Films such as *The Blues Brothers* and *Trading Places* demonstrated his talent and he turns this modern fairy story into a clever comedy with some superb gags.

If you prefer a holiday in the countryside you might choose the sort of small town where Adam and Barbara live in a beautiful wooden-built house. It's an idyllic existence until Adam swerves their car to avoid a dog and crashes into the river! At first nothing seems to have changed for the sweet young couple. Then they try to leave their house and discover that the rolling green hills have become a hostile desert inhabited by vicious sand-worms. Adam and Barbara are dead!

The laws concerning the afterlife mean that they can't leave their old abode, but as relatively inexperienced ghosts they're not able to scare off the New York yuppies who buy the place and immediately turn it into a shrine to trendy tastelessness! Which is why they call it **Beetlejuice** (15), the bio-exorcist!

Their afterlife counsellor does warn them against relying on 'the ghost with the most' but what are a couple of novice spooks supposed to do when even pulling out their eyes and placing them in their mouths doesn't scare off the invaders. Betelgeuse (to give him his proper name) has a reputation for being truly disgusting – but like the New Yorkers, he also has a tendency to stick around.

Beetlejuice is probably the most original comedy of the year and the people primarily responsible are director Tim Burton and star Michael Keaton. Burton, who brought us the odd-ball *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure* and is slated to direct the new *Batman* movie, has created a genuinely bizarre vision of the afterlife, while Keaton, who I've previously loathed, is both hysterically funny and chillingly evil spluttering away as the disgusting spirit. Make sure you haunt a cinema when it's showing!

For a supposedly more serious view of the other

side you'll have to 'Stay out of the light' because those things that go bump in the night want to make it **Poltergeist III** (18), Carol Ann nil! Actually they now go bump in a high rise luxury apartment block because the blonde child has taken a holiday to live with aunt and uncle Patricia and Bruce.

Unluckily she brought the ghostly preacher Kane with her and he keeps appearing out of nowhere like he's been watching too many of the *Elm Street* movies! The way to the other side is through reflections – bad news when the architect has filled the building with floor to ceiling mirror!

Carol Ann demonstrates her psychic powers much to the dismay of doubting psychologist Dr Seaton, who drawls his lines like he's tanked on valium while Tom Skerrit and Nancy Allen are the girl's long suffering relations. Zelda Rubenstein reprises her role as the diminutive medium Tangina, rushing to Carol Ann's rescue when she's kidnapped by Kane.



◄ Boy and dad swap roles in Vice Versa.



▲ Poltergeist III – moves nobody.



▲ More Murphy in Coming to America.

But an exorcist should have been called in earlier. Compared with the wit and originality of the original, this is shoddy stuff. One character gets left on the other side (preparation for a sequel?) and nobody seems to care. By far the best thing about the film is the effects work, in which reflections suddenly gain a life of their own. These are truly spectacular and almost make up for the cliched story – but not quite.

I mentioned **Vice Versa** (PG) last month, but here's a reminder to catch it if you can. It contains more supernatural shenanigans as yuppie father (he even has an electric revolving tie-rack!) and son swap places thanks to an ancient Eastern skull! Cue multiple confusions as young Charlie has to handle his dad's board meetings while Marshall learns that school days aren't necessarily the best of your life!

The film stars Judge Reinhold, who was good in Beverly Hills Cop, and brilliant youngster, Fred Savage. They're both so good they'll really convince you that they have swapped bodies. A delightfully fresh script from Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais, the British writers of *Auf Wiedersehen Pet*, make this a magical gem.

If you want a beach holiday this year you really ought to **Shag** (15)! No – stop giggling you dirty minded lot because the Shag is a dance which was all the rage in 1963. I suppose it's a natural progression from *Dirty Dancing!*

But **Shag** is ten times better than Filthy Foxtrot. Instead of the bland romance it's got a story like a female American Graffiti as four American girls take off for a weekend together at Myrtle Beach before the glamorous Carson marries the exceedingly dull and respectable Harley.

Shag stands out because it recreates the carefree feel of a sixties summer with cars cruising up and down the strip, a beauty contest, a visit by a third rate pretender to Elvis' crown. You've gotta believe that girls just want to have fun as the quartet meet the local boys, hold the wildest party since Animal House, and enter the Shag contest.

The performances are brilliant, and if all this talk of love and dancing sounds too 'female' then you should be warned that Carson is played by ultra-cute Phoebe Cates (of Bright Lights Big City fame), while ambitious Melaina (Bridget Fonda) fills out a stars and stripes bikini very nicely, thank you! Being greedy I fell in love with all four girls. Shag is a wonderfully fresh, funny, lively film and I make it my movie of the month.

If you refuse to believe Ward and insist that Shagging is too soppy, there's choreography of another kind in **Bloodsport** (18), a return of the venerable martial art of Ho-Kum! If we're going to have a seventies revival, as everyone keeps telling me, the return of the kick flick could be one of the better aspects.

The reason they call the Kumite by such a sanguinary name is that in this full-contact, free-style contest held in semi-secrecy in Hong Kong every five years, the claret regularly gets spilled.

Our hero is clean cut American Frank Dux (pronounced 'Dooks' – nobody says 'Hello, ducks' to him) who has a face which is as emotive as an Action Man doll and a kick of steel. He's in training for Military Intelligence but takes time off to enter the contest in memory of the Japanese martial arts teacher who taught him the tricks of the ninja.

There are sub-plots about a couple of defence agents who want Frank to return to the States and a female reporter who wants to write about the contest, but the real interest is the fighting. I couldn't help thnking that seeing Dux use his spectacular techniques in a military mission may be more interesting but I suppose they're saving that for a sequel. For the time being the fighting of Jean-Claude Van Damme and many other martial arts masters will provide hours of schlock-suey kung-fuey for all you beat-'em-up fans!

There's a battle for life in **Hawks** but neither Timothy (007) Dalton nor Anthony Edwards has a chance of winning. Their fight is against cancer! Edwards is an American footballer stranded in Britain with the fatal disease which has robbed him of his strength. But just as he's about to drown in self-pity, irreverent Dalton throws him a life belt. Both men will get a respite before they die, and rather than hang around in hospital Dalton suggests they steal an ambulance and live it up in Amsterdam.

Death – real death, compared with the sanitised 'Bang – ugh!' of films – is an uncomfortable subject, and this portrait of two men refusing to surrender to illness could have been gripping, blackly humorous and extremely moving. Unluckily the script fails tocreate real sympathy and the direction is so coarse that the result is depressingly like Confessions of a Terminal Patient.

BIG Screen

THE BARD'S TALE

► **MACHINE: SPEC/AMS/ AMIGA/ST/C64/PC.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS.**
► **PRICE: £8.95 CASS, £14.95 DISK.**
► **VERSIONS TESTED: SPEC/AMS.**
► **REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.**

There's not much doubt that the *Bard's Tale* is the most successful attempt yet to re-create the excitement of a fantasy role-playing game. Already a big success in sixteen-bit formats, the game has now made it onto the Spectrum and Amstrad with practically all the playing characteristics intact, though with an inevitable loss in the areas of graphics and sound.

The Bard's Tale offers just about everything you could want from an FRPG; huge playing area, complex character definitions, endless variations and sophisticated use of objects and magical spells. It's set in Skara Brae, a huge city featuring the obligatory castles, dungeons and catacombs.

You start off with an adventuring party of six characters. On the left of the screen appears either the view around you, or the characters you meet; on the right is a text display telling you what's happening; and at the bottom are the traditional counters showing your character name, and such attributes as strength, hit points taken, experience points, gold carried and so on.

The great thing about *The Bard's Tale* is that you don't have to have any real aim as you explore the city of Skara Brae. However, if you want to actually complete the game, the idea is to gain experieince points (from surviving battles), qualify for a higher rank in the Adventurers' Guild, and fight your way through the castle until you defeat the tyrant Mangar.

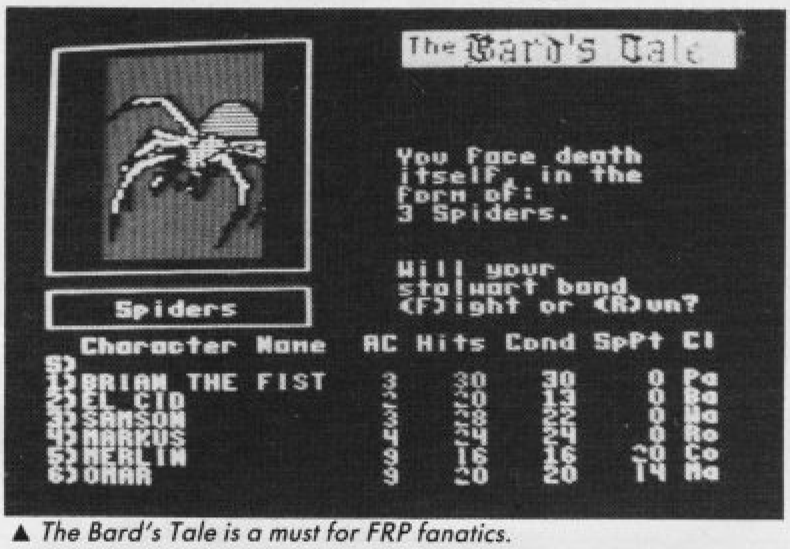
The battle routines are pretty good. On each round, you can choose the order in which your characters will advance, and if you opt for them to attack, defend, hide, use an object or, if appropriate, use magic or sing a song.

Magical spells, the availability of which depends on the experience off your magic-user, can make all the difference in a battle; simply type in the four-letter abbreviation for the appropriate spell (given in the handbook) and you can bring light where there's darkness, blast your enemies asunder, render your party invulnerable, reveal magic doors, and so on.

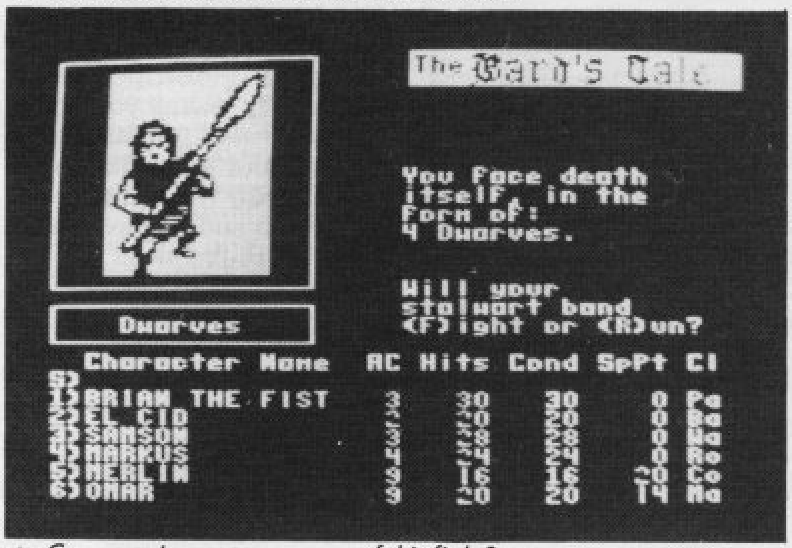
Singing characters (bards) can do a bit of good by breaking into song at the right moment; some songs stimulate warriors to greater feats of battle, others frighten the enemy, some heal wounds.

You can break out of most combats if your party begins to take too much damage, but if you win you will usually gain experience points and treasure. Since you can face up to 99 opponents in each battle (usually small ones such as rats, you'll be relieved to hear), the greatest skill in the game consists of knowing when discretion is the better part of valour.

Though something of the charm has been lost along with the excellent graphics and music of the sixteen-bit versions, *The Bard's Tale* remains the best attempt at computer FRPGs.



▲ *The Bard's Tale is a must for FRP fanatics.*



▲ *Can you sing your way out of this fight?*

► GRAPHICS	5
► REALISM	4
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	7

FOOTNOTE . . .

The Bard's Tale is now available for most major formats. The Spectrum and Amstrad versions include extra scenarios and character sets on a second cassette, and forthcoming is Bard's Tale 2, already available for the Amiga and ST, and on the way for the eight-bit computers. Once again, the adventure is set in Skara Brae, but this time there are even more complex situations and deadly enemies to encounter.

BARDS TALE III

► **MACHINE: COMMODORE 64 DISK.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS.**
► **PRICE: £16.95.**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.**

Skara Brae has been destroyed, and must be released from its bond of ruin, by tracking down and eliminating the Evil One, who caused its destruction. Starting off from a refugee camp set in the heart of the ruins, you set about exploring the land together with a band of adventurers.

But before you can begin this epic, it is necessary to make backup copies of the two double sided disks on which the game is recorded. The task is simplified through the use of a built-in formatter and copier.

You can choose to be accompanied by a band of characters already created on disk for you, or to build up your own set, assigning each a race, sex, and character attributes of strength, dexterity, intelligence, constitution, and luck.

Building a character requires some thought, for those of poor calibre will be a handicap to the party when it sets out. For example, a strong but dim mage will be pretty useless – if your mage is intelligent, don't worry too much about his strength. To help select the right balance of attributes, there is a detailed set of tips and instructions in the 32 page booklet accompanying the game.

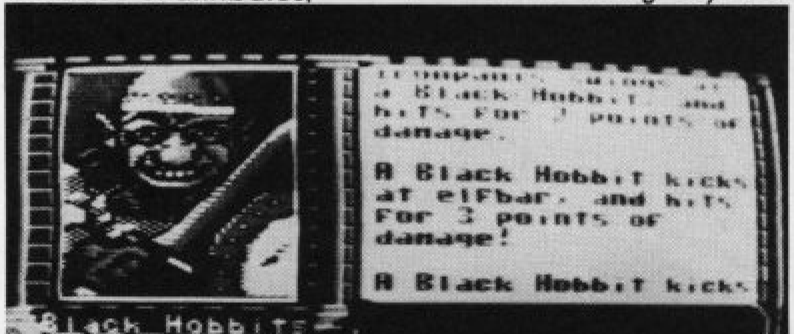
The screen constantly displays the names of the characters, together with details of their armour class, hit points, condition, and spell points. Above this, there is a small picture of what the party can see in the direction in which they are facing; to the right of this is the narative.

The map is based on a grid of squares, and the current position relative to the refugee camp is obtained by keying '?', for example: "You're in the Wilderness, and six paces north and two paces south of the refugee camp of Skara Brae."


▲ *The wandering bard finds his way to the title screen.*



▲ *Two disks "it's big" says KC.*



▲ *Panel displays your companions – what a crew.*

It pays to map the grid, for there is little chance of using the pictures to recognise where the party is. However, at the extremities of the Wasteland area, there is a roll-over to the opposite side of the map, making mapping extremely confusing, unless '?' is used quite frequently. After moving about 15 paces west, for example, further westerly movement will result in the party finding itself four paces east of the camp. So the world is round – but is it really this small?

When monsters attack it's up to the player to assign a mode to each member of his party, bearing in mind his or her weapons and attributes. They may attack, defend, hide, cast a spell, or merely strum a tune. As the fight progresses, a smoothly scrolling commentary appears in the narative window. Should a bold adventurer get killed, there's always the chance of a miracle down at the local shrine, where a reincarnation may be purchased if you have enough readies.

There are many other features and subleties of play.

Bard's Tale III is a big and complex game. It should not fail to enthrall role-playing enthusiasts.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	7

UPDATE . . .

Bards Tale III is available on disk only for the 64 at the moment – and is likely to be some time (probably next year according to EA) until PC and 16-bit versions follow. No decision has been made on Speccy and Amstrad versions.



Leisure Suit Larry

▲ *Blondes have more fun in KC's column.*

► SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION/ SIERRA ON-LINE.
► MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA, IBM PC.
► PRICE: £19.99.
► REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL.

Tired of slogging away over a hot computer, playing adventures that weary the brain? Here's something a bit different, but if your under 18, then turn the page!



▲ *Larry visits several locations in his quest.*

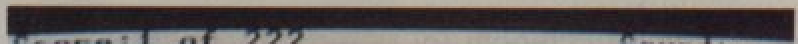
In the same format as sierra's 'Quest' seiries, this is an animated graphical adventure that requires the use of a mouse, joystick or cursor keyes, to move Larry around, plus text commands to play the adventure. But unlike *Space Quest* and the others, this is one for adults only. So if your over 18 (and can prove it!) why not have a night out on the town, and join Larry Laffer in search of fun and frolics?

Getting into the game is not easy, and probably just as well, for whilst no four letter words appear on the screen (unless you happen to type them in yourself) the game is less subte than a church full of Goddesses. There is a stringent age test, by the way of five questions – difficult even for adults if their not American. Two wrong answers will take you right back to the desktop. Did you know what or with whom former congressman Wilbur Mills went for a dip in the tidal basin? No, thought not – nor did I! And repeated attempts to get the answers right are not easy, for the questions come randomly from what seems to be a very large repertoire!

Once through the test, though, the game is sheer entertainment – if you like that sort of thing! There's catchy theme music on and off throughout the game, and plenty of sound effects.

Let's start off with a drink, Larry. Beer? And another? And another? Jeez, Larry, your breath smells like the insides of a motorman's gloves! Where's the gents? Follow me, and do try to walk straight, Larry, or you'll never make it! That guy with the joystick is trying his best to get you there!

No, Larry, don't tread on that drunk, your pointy shoes will do him a mischief! Just head for the cubicle, and answer the calls of nature. Jeez, Larry, that was quick! Did something just die in there? I can't bear it, let's get back to the bar.



▲ *Playing for funds in the casino.*

"Hey, dork! There's toilet paper stuck to your shoe!" Who said that? Surely not the lady sitting at the bar? Go on, scrape it off, then, Larry.

But you aren't just out on the booze, are you? No, you're after something other than that, and I just guessed what! Perhaps you'll get it behind the padded door?

So, being quick with a cab to avoid a dog that prefers his leg to a lampost, Larry is soon walking through the automatic sliding glass doors of the imposing casino, his breath smelling like the floor sweepings from a rendering plant. Now he's going to have a real

y and the Lounge Lizards

gamble on the Blackjack tables.

Read the house rules first, Larry! Minimum bet is $2, maximum $20, and the house limits total winnings to $250. It's not easy to reach that limit, but to be sure you have enough cash for all the temptations that might lie ahead, let's go for it! Wow – $150 already! Wait for it, Larry, the guy with the joystick is going to save it for you, in case your luck turns!

Say, what's on at the Cabaret? You like blue jokes, even crude American ones? Hmm . . . I preferred the ones I heard in Lefty's bar. I'd heard 'em all before, mind! Dancing girls? OK, I'll wait, Larry, but they'd beter be better than this stand up comic. OK, bet you're itching to spend your hard won cash, now. No! Don't go upstairs and disturb all those people trying to get a good night's sleep in their hotel bedrooms! What's that – a sheep? Don't even think about it, Larry! And your breath is beginning to smell like an athlete's running shoes . . .

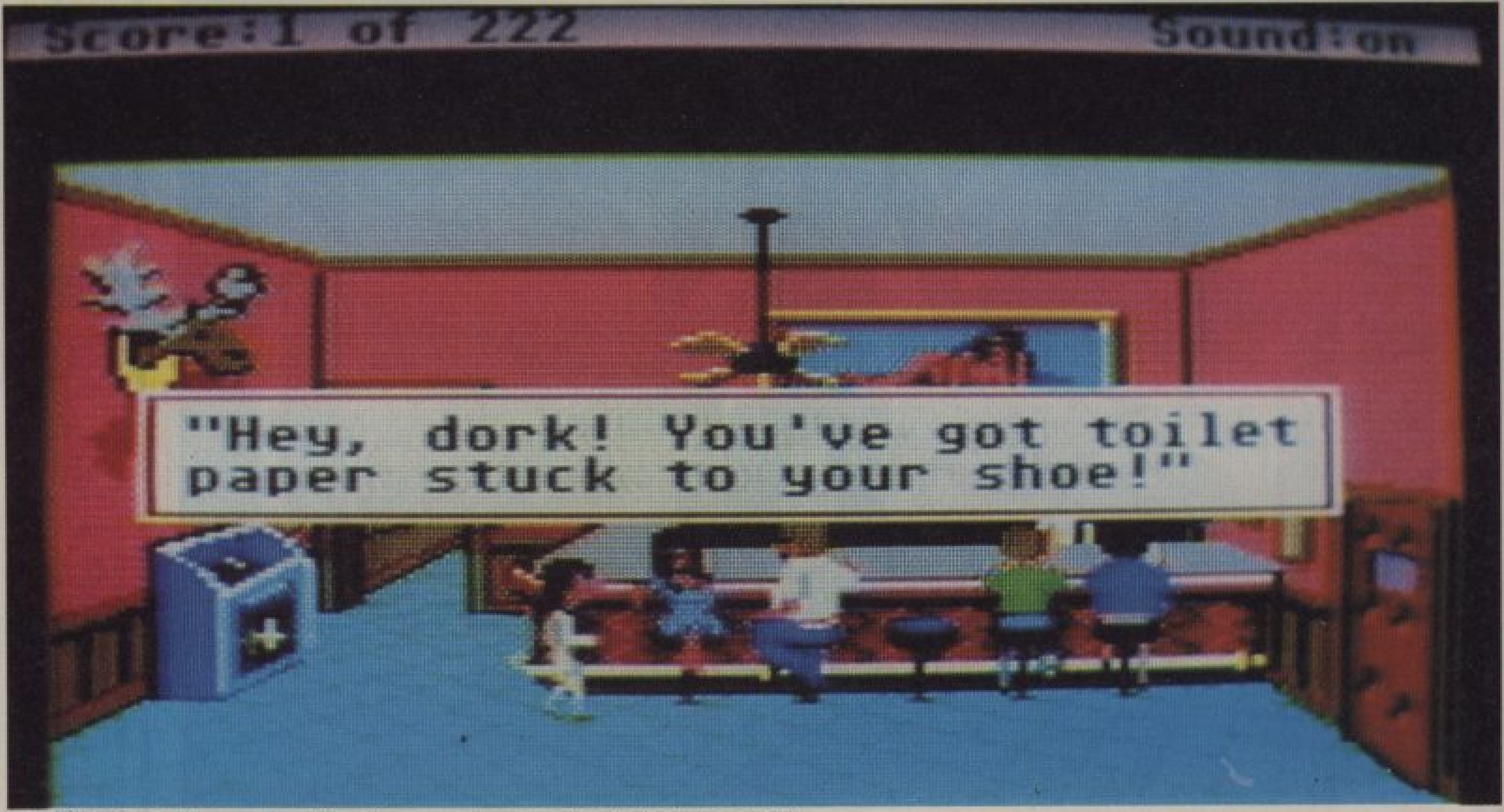
Just for a precaution or three, perhaps you should visit the drug store next? Oh Larry, I can't take you anywhere, can I? I told you to look over your shoulder to check there was no-one around, before you asked the assistant. Striped, ribbed, rough, and spearmint flavoured? How embarrassing! Now for goodness sake be careful what you say on that phone . . .

Oi! Where are you taking me now, Larry? The Disco? Disco dancing is energenic, Larry! Sure you'll be up to it, when you get the chance to get down to it? OK then, but leave Fawn alone, she looks like a nice girl! Just have a dance with her and . . . Hey! Mind that ceiling for heaven's sake! And Jeez Larry, anyone ever tell you your breath smells?

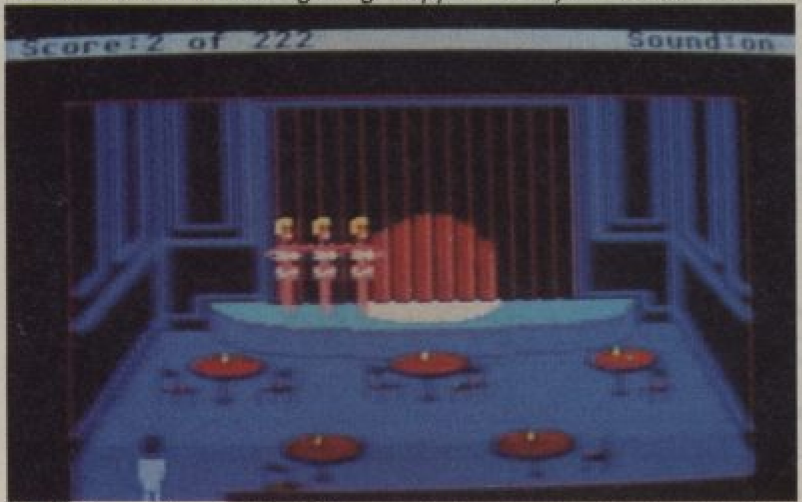
Here we leave Larry, proud and upstanding, to get on with his own thing. He certainly provides a lot of laughs in what is a thoroughly entertaining adventure. Even if you can't solve all the problems (yes – there's quite a few, there really is!) you probably won't mind at all, for it's such fun.

Leisure Suit Larry is presented with superbly animated graphics – by far the best yet from Sierra. To watch Larry dancing in the disco, to see a close-up of his partner's face, or even merely to go for a ride in a cab, is like watching a fully animated cartoon film! There is even one lengthy automated sequence, where you may discover what happens when a dead adventurer types RESTORE!

Coupled with catchy music and plenty of sound effects, Leisure Suit Larry is an adventure that really will transport you into a world of fantasy. Wink, wink! Nudge, nudge!

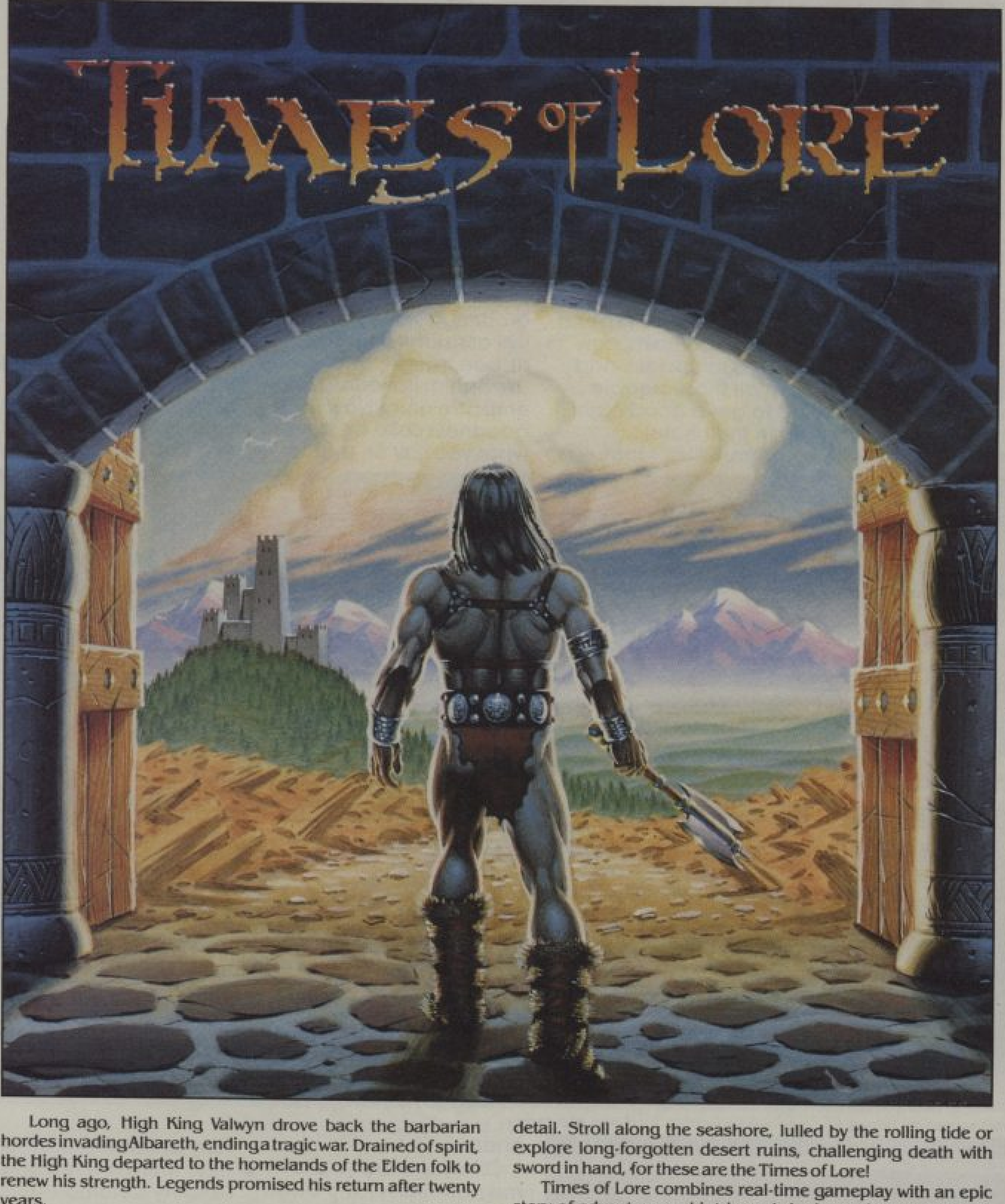


▲ *The most embarrassing things happen when you've had one too many.*



▲ *Bring on the dancing girls.*

► VOCABULARY	7
► ATMOSPHERE	8
► PERSONAL	8
► VALUE	8



Long ago, High King Valwyn drove back the barbarian hordes invading Albareth, ending a tragic war. Drained of spirit, the High King departed to the homelands of the Elden folk to renew his strength. Legends promised his return after twenty years.

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The Fiend

Oh, how The Fiend suffers in the name of Adventuredom. Oh the sacrifices that I have had to make on YOUR behalf, my faithful followers. I only hope that you appreciate my anguish, having to sit here night after night, forcing myself to complete *Leather Goddesses Of Phobos*, and try to seduce all manner of women, in the guise of Leisure Suit Larry, however distasteful the task.

All of which set the Fiend thinking about naughty bits in general. Having done that I thought about naughty bits in adventure games in particular. Are they really necessary? Do they improve a game, or degrade it? Are they ethical?

Naughty games have been with us since day one. I seem to remember classified ads for games that arrived in plain brown paper, and contained 'adventures' of dubious intent, set in Soho. Not that the Fiend lowered himself to play any. How could you even think of it? But with *Leather* the genre suddenly became respectable and above board. After all, it is professionally produced and packaged, and does contain three levels of naughtiness, so you don't have to be offended or corrupted, do you? Yet the prompts in the game keep steering you to the naughtier levels, unless you possess a will of iron, like the Fiend. And boys will be boys. This one really raises the ethical question of profits over morality.

But how about non-naughty games? You know, the ones with the hidden bits. *Ship of Doom* had its android, and *The Pawn* its princess. Arduous though it may be, the Fiend sat and replayed these bits recently. Purely out of scientific curiosity, you understand.

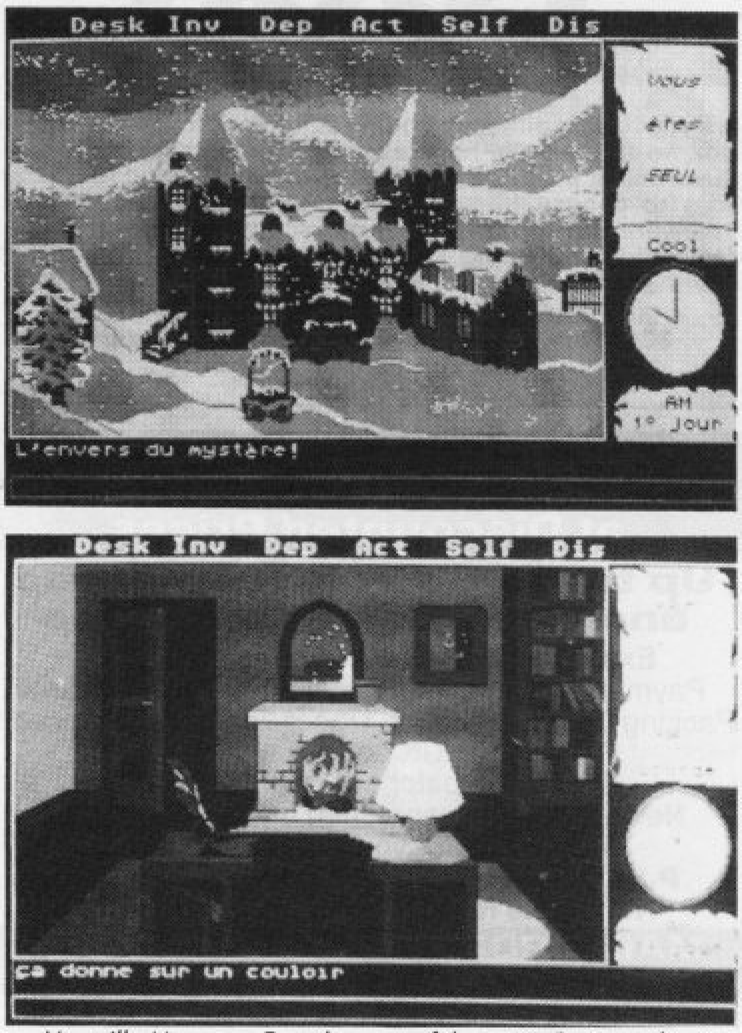
There can be no doubt, because I am about to say so, that these bits ARE acceptable, if done in the best possible taste, and with humour. For those untainted souls playing the games will not even know what they missed, and those less innocent (most of you lot) would not be shocked or corrupted by the response. In this manner, adventure games differ from books and films, where what is written is openly displayed for all to see. In adventure games you have to go digging around to discover what may be hidden, and without the key, you will not find. With one exception. Beware you rude-bit programmers, that the word SCREAM, which is innocent enough in itself, has on several occasions been misinterpreted by the parser, and an inappropriate response angrily received!

Speaking of keys, I can verify that Maid Marion's chastity belt is NOT removable. This should be fairly obvious, as otherwise she would be 'Woman Marion', wouldn't she? And rumours of strange goings on in the Hobbit, featuring goblins and elves, are ill-founded.

Ah, woe is me. Back to Phobos I must go, as despite completing the game, somewhere, somehow, I lost a few points. I obviously left some stone unturned, or something undone, perhaps. Hmm, now where did I leave that yak?

News

● Where have all the adventures gone? After a flurry of hot titles in the early part of the summer, it now seems everyone has gone to sleep until the autumn!



▲ *Mortville Manor – French game of the year. Reviewed next month.*

We've had *Legend of the Sword* and *Corruption* from Rainbird, *Shadowgate* and the ST release of *Uninvited* from Mindscape, The ST *Adventure Creator* from Incentive, *MicroMud* from Virgin, Wolfman from CRL, and *Mindfighter* from Activision.

There should be another Infocom title or two trickling through soon. Level 9's Lancelot seems likely to be the next "biggy" likely to come along, but when is still not clear. And around the same time, or perhaps a bit later, we should be seeing *Fish*, the next adventure from Magnetic Scrolls.

Thank heavens for Larry, that lovable randy little fellow from Sierra On-Line. Larry's been around a few months – in fact, the first I heard of him was from Christian Martensen, adventure columnist and deputy editor of the Danish magazine *COMputer*, back in the new year. But mysteriously, Activision, has been keeping a very low profile over it. Could be that they're worried about a Whitehouse backlash. But the evil is in the mind of the player!

A friend suddenly reminded me, when he announced he had a pirate copy for his IBM. "There's pirate copies all over the place – the lads at my son's office have all got one, and they've wrapped up the game, too!" He announced. So I rang Mediagenic, and begged for the review copy that hadn't been forthcoming earlier in the year. As an adult adventure, it's a winner!

MORE GNOMES

● After Lancelot, Level 9's next release through Mandarin Software, will be *Gnome Ranger II*. Level 9 is determined to have a new game at this year's PC Show, and Pete Austin suspects that Mandarin will hold *Lancelot* until that time. However, if Lancelot appears earlier, everybody's favourite gnome will be making her second appearance in September.

And guess what comes next? Why, *Gnome Ranger III*, of course, but not until next year! Perhaps the Austins will be producing a few Rocky's next . . .

Helpline

Stuck in an adventure? KC and his crew can help. Adventure Helpline, C+VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV

This month the talk is of *Shadowgate*, an adventure that is rapidly becoming a hit Helpline. **Shadowgate** and his friend are playing it in Brighton, and have come to a grinding halt. Here's a few things that are bothering them. Are the Hobgoblins red herrings? Can you open the globe in the study? How do you get up to the archway without breaking the ledge? Not a lot to ask, is it?

Similar pleas come from **Allen** and **Mark Errington**, of Durham. Can the dragon be killed or passed? Is there anything to do in the armoury? And finally, where is the key for the third door from the banqueting hall - not the ones that lead to the observatory or the hell hound?

Meanwhile, general clues for *Uninvited*, stable mate of *Shadowgate*, are invited, for a number of readers.

And back to earth with what is rapidly becoming a golden oldy - how do you recruit Mr. Video, and how do you make Soapy stagger out of the pub? Sounds like a couple of dodgy questions there, from *Dodgy Geezer* **Andrew Baranowski**, of Bradford.

Who remembers an adventure called Smugglers Cave? Back in the dim and distant past it appeared in spectoral form, and later, apparently, on an Amstrad. This is where **Damon Hawkins** of Mooroobool in Queensland caught up with it. But it finally caught up with him when it placed a pirate in front of him, beard quivering with rage, and refusing to Damon pass. And that elevator also has Damon baffled - how on earth do you operate it?

Shed a tear for **Andrew Bethell**, who is continally being gulped by the Crocodile Idol in *Beyond Zork*. Trying to pilfer the spectacular jewel, he is having spectacular success. Nor is **Stephan Englhart** , from West Germany. He has completed the game, but never did manage to get hold of the jewel. 'Strange that you can complete a game without having to solve one of the major problems,' he comments.

Whilst on Infocom games, **Andrew** has run out of puzzles to solve in *Lurking Horror*! 'Adventure should have puzzles coming out of the woodwork,' says Andrew. 'You shouldn't have to go on an expedition to actually find them!'

Who knows how to pass the gatekeeper in Part 2 of *Karyssia*, to help out **Matthew Conway,** of Lambourn?

David Hesketh went into the palace, couldn't do anything there, went back outside, and couldn't go anywhere without ending back where he started – by the tree. It's Venom again – advice urgently needed, please!

Now here's a problem that's close to my heart! Has anyone had a bit more luck than **Andrew Baxter** of Manchester, in doing ANYTHING worthwhile on the ship, in Murder Off Miami?

Mike Thomas, that prolific letter writer from Wales, has a few words for Gavrok, who launched forth on his inability to find an adventure game to buy. **Mike** works in the computer department of John Menzies in Cardiff (pop in and say 'hello' to him, all you local adventure fans!) and he reports that the only adventure they stock is "the appalling Football Frenzy." When he questioned his superior who orders the games, he was told that adventures are 'a dying breed. "That's rich, coming from a QL owner!" he says. It seems that stores don't stock adventures because they don't sell. "But how can they sell, when they don't stock them?" Mike asks. Chicken and egg, by the sound of it.

Now here's a leading question! How do you get down the stairs with the princess, and how do you get past Kronos?

Most of the pleas printed in these pages do not fall upon deaf ears! If you have a problem, or can help someone out, drop me a line. I'll do my best to get back to you.

Clues

Help this month came from: Colin Barrow, Irvine; Mandy Flower, Bath; Marco Andreoli, Turin; Jarle Skirbekk, Kolsas, Norway; Allen and Mark Errington, Durham; Stephan Wiestner, Therwil, Switzerland; Andrew Bethnell, Wallsall; Martyn Amos, Newcastle Upon Tyne; Dick Light, Hitchin; Mandy Flower, Bath; Paul Hardy, Sheffield; and Mike Thomas, Caerphilly.

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
To pass the guards, introduce the bomb to them.

JINXTER:
There are ways to transport the saddle. Pay for someone else to deliver it, or carry it yourself, under wraps.

VENOM:
Before leaving the taproom, open the barrel, put berries in it, and fill the wineskin. Don't drink it yourself, unless you're feeling like a sleep!

Examine the bushes AFTER examining the scuff marks.

KNIGHTMARE:
Give food and water to the old man. Then ask, and go to the room to the east, and dig with the spade he's given to you.

CORRUPTION:
A bit of force is needed for the folder!

POLICE QUEST:
Use the phone in the hotel room to call Lt. Morgan. Then call for a taxi. Marie will leave.

SPHINX:
The route through the maze of coloured rooms is: S, S, N, E, W, S, D, D, U, from the bear's cave.

Say DIAXOS in the west ante-chamber.

FRANKENSTEIN:
To escape the ice labyrinth, move north from where you find the ice pick, and find where the ice has not properly formed, high above. Cut a hole in the wall with the pick, climb up, and rest.

Continue to do this until you are too tired to go any further, then drop the pick, climb up, and go out.

KING'S QUEST:
Catch the friendly bird when it tries to land – jump.

FANTASTIC FOUR:
To shift the boulder, Nova it, and deposit the chip under. Then let Thing do some hard throwing!

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
To pass the rototank, give the dog a bone and wait. Then climb, and go W,S,SE.

To start in Part two, put the goggles in the satchel, and take the bomb north. Leave it and go south. Go north into the hut to refill the stun gun after it explodes.

SPACE QUEST 2:
To operate the sprinkler, put paper in the waste basket, drop the basket, and burn the paper.

To cross the swamp, rub berries on your body. The berries are on the bush behind the rock monster.

UNINVITED:
Operate the amulet on a zombie.

GOBLIN TOWERS:
The giant is sitting on the rope, in this cave hidden in the castle maze. To reach it, go E from the round room, then E, E, SE, and U.

MICROSELL

Selling? Buying? Here's the Market Place!!

It only costs
£5
to advertise in this section!
- Ads must be for the private sale of hardware only.
- No more than 25 words long.

Amstrad 1512/DD colour monitor with printer. Little used. Many games plus D-Base III plus, Lotus 1.2.3, and more. £950. Telephone: 0279-870914 (Anytime).

C128-D, monitor, MPS-803, cassette, graphics, tablet, voice master, and software and hardware worth over £4,000. Open to offers. Ring 051-3361711 for list, evenings only.

Nintendo entertainment system. Super Mario Brothers, Kung Fu, Tennis, Ice Climber Cartridges. Two Wico Joysticks. Cost £195 new. Accept £95 ono. Rotherham 589501. After 6.30pm.

Amstrad CPC 6128, disk drive, monitor 150 original recent games, modulator, external tape deck. 30 magazines, 3 joysticks, books, everything for £325. telephone 0245 469755.

CBM 128 disk drive, £300 worth of software, magazines and joystick, boxed 2 cartridges, all for £300. Phone Marcus 0582 83 3501. After 4.30 pm.

Commodore 64C, datarecorder, mouse all boxed immaculate condition. 16 months guarantee, QS II "T" joystick, £247 original software latest titles. £230 ono. Telephone: 0695 73147 After 5pm.

For sale C64 data recorder plus 2 joysticks. Over £1,000 worth of original software. Ex cond. will sell for £350: tel 0631 63693 (Oban) ask for Martin.

Sega Master system still under guarantee + 2 joysticks and 3170 worth of games including afterburner, wonderboy, etc. For only £130. Telephone Sheffield (0742) 435388. After 5pm.

Commodore 64, disk drive, freeze machine, joystick, tape back up board, datacassette, mouse and cheese. Lots of games and disks. £300 ono. Telephone Lyndon Cardiff 568341.

For sale. Year old Amstrad CPC 464, colour monitor, software worth £600 joystick. Immaculate condition. Worth over £900 will sell for £420. Ring 051-924 5539 After 4.30 pm.

Spectrum 128+ with interface, two jysticks, leads, powerpack, books, magazines and over £300 worth of software. £120. telephone 0295 4039.

C64, 1541C disk drive, C2N cassette deck, joystick manuals, all in excellent condition. Over 200 games, only £300. telephone 0272 839899 after 7 pm for more details.

BBC'B' (boxed) data recorder (boxed), speech rom, joystick, manuals, books, over £240 of software. Total value £740 + sell for £250. telephone (0522) 21407 or (0909) 500204 after 7 pm.

Amiga 500 + modulator, manuals + software, £300 ono. telephone Alastair all day on (0748) 3797.

BBC B, joystick, games (on disk), 40/80 Trak disk drive. Speech chip + phrom. Transfrom (Tape to Disc). Will sell for £360 ono. Worth £800. telephone 746 8064 After 5 pm.

Commodore 64, Excellerator + Plus disk drive, joystick, books, data recorder, over 60 disk + £300 of software, mouse, cheese and art studio, freeze machine, music maker. All perfect. Sell for $400 ono. Tel: 472 3251 10-2 pm. 476 6739 after 5 pm.

CBM 500 Amiga + A1084 monitor with 11 months guarantee, also interceptor, leatherneck. Sell for £570 ono. SAE Ken, 268 Barking Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8HR.

Commodore 64, 1541 Disk Drive, tape deck, sound amp + speakers, disk + box, games utilities, books, mags, joystick, acton replay MK1V. Worth over £450 sell for £220. tel: (0244) 821484 ask for Justin (eves).

BBC'B' computer. Single and twin joysticks, data recorder, over £100 of software, instruction book. Hardly used. Telephone 0272 843748 eves.

Atari 800XL, XC12 tape deck, dust covers, tape rack, 2 cheetah 125 joysticks, £250 of software, 2.5 years Atari user + binders. Telephone 0786 63663 ask for Scott £250 ono.

Atari 800XL, datarecorder, disk drive, 2 joysticks, manuals, touch tablet, over 100 games "auto duel (disk), Gauntlet, etc. "only £250 ono. Phone Leicester 0533 402330.

Intellivision, master component wanted must be in good condition. Please phone with offers 01-994 5616 after 7 pm.

CBM 64; data recorder, 3 joysticks £40 of mags. £250 of games including some new ones. £180 for everything. Phone 01-892 2875. Ask for Brendan.

Amstrad CPC 464 including colur monitor. Excellent condition. Only one year old. Plenty of software. Worth £400. Selling for £250 ono. telephone 01-376 5136.

CBM 64, 1541, MPS803, 22" TV – colour, freeze machine, loadsabooks, about £1500 of software (many new). Best offer around. £600 accepted. telephone Gary 0223 832992 after 6 pm.

Colour CPC 6128, DMP 2000, AMX, Stop press £200 + software, including Amdrum, AA Studio includes, screen vision worth £900 + Sell for £500 ono. Or swap Atari 520ST. Telephone 04575 4936 eves Simon.

Send your ad together with a cheque/PO for £5 to: Microsell Dept. C + VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.


Can You Stop The Russian Bear?
Red
Storm
Rising
Based on the NO. 1 best-selling book Red Storm Rising by Tom Clancy; Larry Bond co-author. Copyright 1986 by Jack Ryan Enterprises Ltd and Larry Bond. All rights reserved.
Free MicroProse timepiece with selected MicroProse products at larger branches of W H Smith between 16 August and 10 October 1988.
Look out for the specially labelled product at your W H Smith computer department.

The fantasy section starts here!! Lots has been happening on the FRP scene lately, with Games Workshop issuing a mountain of accessories and Standard Games releasing the definitive guide to roleplaying for the total beginner. Add to this the chance to play a superhero of your choice and you have what's covered in this month's FRP section.

FANtASy

Dragonroar

► **SUPPLIER: STANDARD GAMES.**
► **COMPLEXITY: BEGINNERS.**
► **PRICE: £12.95.**

Getting into Fantasy Role Playing is no easy thing. There are a large number of games and accessories available to the first time buyer plus a whole new language of gaming terms to be learned. Add to this complex rules, as well as a definite lack of explanatory supportive material, and it is easy to see why some people never get involved in the hobby in the first place!

With the release of *Dragonroar*, Standard Games has gone a long way to solving many of the novice's problems. They have come up with a product which is simple to play, easy to learn and very enjoyable.

The first thing to do is to listen to side A of the enclosed cassette. This explains what role playing is all about, how you play the game and generally answers all those nagging questions that you have been dying to know the answers to.

Now turn to the rule book to see how the gaming system works. The cassette talks you through character creation, movement and combat refering you back to the rulebook at various times to explain examples. Once you have a basic grasp of the rules, you are then advised to read the rulebook two or three times to make certain that you know them. You can draw a comparison between the rulebook and a telephone directory; you don't have to know it off by heart, but you do have to know where to look.

Once this is done you have two options. You can play the game with a group of other players or play on your own. If you choose to play with others you have to elect two other people, one being the "Fatemaster", the other being the "Arbiter".

The Fatemaster is the key to the whole affair. The person who takes this position plays the part of a referee. They must set the scene for the adventure, be familiar with the rules and try to think of the possible eventualities that may arise in the game. They make it possible for the other players to play the game.

The Arbiter is someone elected by the players as a policy maker. They must take into account what the party intends to do and informs the Fatemaster of the group's actions. The party should decide things on the democratic basis of one player one vote. The arbiter then takes everything the group says into account and makes the decision, if necessary.

As a single player, you have an entertaining threat in front of you. On side B of the cassette is a solo adventure! All you have to do is lay out the enclosed floor plans in order and once again the cassette will talk you through. However, this time it is done as an adventure with special sound effects. Basically, you play the part of a pre-determined character called Tolmar, who has a magical family heirloom stolen from him by a man called Zanto. It is your quest to retrieve it and it is no easy task. You have to decend into into his deadly domain, where you meet horrible hobgoblins, ravinous rats and terrible traps, each of which has their own individual sound effect.

At certain times the narrator of the story tells you to flip over the floor plans and you find yourself in another room, with a unique encounter for you to attempt to conquoer.

Most encounters involve fighting of one description or another, and it was nice to find a combat system that is quite detailed, yet simple to opperate.

The same goes for the magic system. At certain times, with certain weapons, combat can be quite lethal, but it only serves to add to the realism of the game.

All in all, this is the complete package for the absolute novice, it introduces you to, and includes, six different shaped dice, ranging from a four sided die to a twelve sider and explains how to use them. Also included is a full colour dungeon floor plan, mapping paper, tokens to represent both the monsters and characters, quick reference play sheets plus a couple of pre-planned adventures.



▲ *Dragonroar contains dice, cassette, dungeon floor plan, paper — a complete starter pack.*

The cassette is very well recorded and includes everything from interesting sound effects to a nifty piece of music, which bides your time whilst you get everything together.

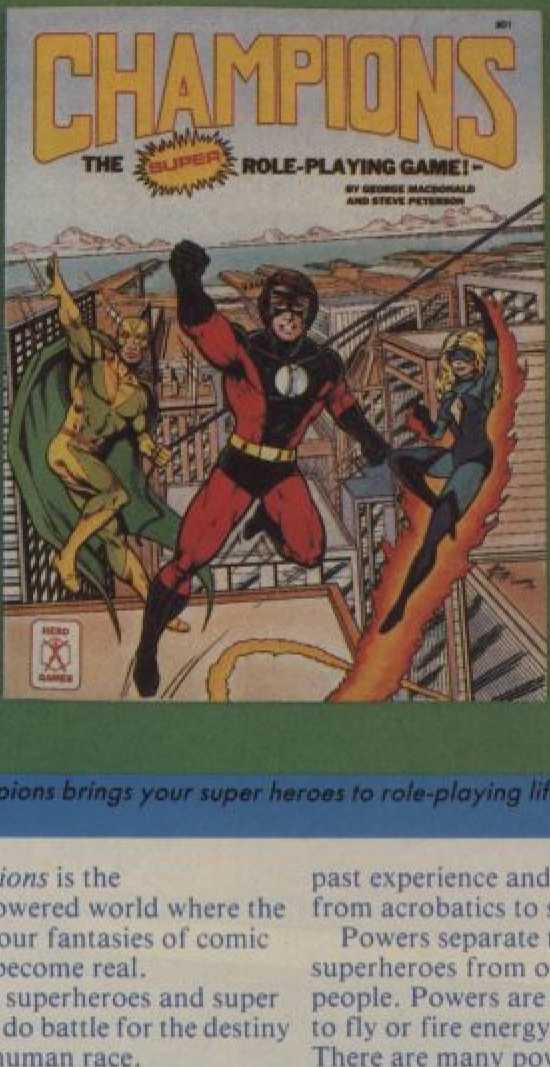
So, if you are contemplating entering the fantastic world of Fantasy Role Playing, *Dragonroar* is definitely the game for you.

► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	9
► PRESENTATION	9
► COMPLEXITY	3
► OVERALL	7

ROLE PLAYING

Champions

► **SUPPLIER: GAMES OF LIVERPOOL.**
► **PUBLISHERS: HERO GAMES.**
► **REVIEWER: WAYNE.**
► **COMPLEXITY: FAIRLY EXPERIENCED.**
► **PRICE: £7.95.**



▲ *Champions brings your super heroes to role-playing life.*

Champions is the superpowered world where the full colour fantasies of comic books become real.

Here superheroes and super villians do battle for the destiny of the human race.

Here, armed with just the rulebook, a few dice, a couple of pencils and the odd metal figure, anyone can become a superhero.

To start off you have to create you own character. This is fairly easy and the rules guide you through this process, refering you to many examples on the way. Basically, you have to work out what kind of superhero you would like to be and once you have the basic idea you then flesh it out with skills and powers.

Skills are the abilities that characters have learned in their past experience and may range from acrobatics to stealth.

Powers separate the superheroes from ordinary people. Powers are the ability to fly or fire energy bolts. There are many powers to choose from and you can get yourself in a right state considering the permatations and combinations for your hero. To help you decide, the powers have been grouped into four catagories, namely; Offensive; Defensive; Movement and Others.

You pay for both skills and powers with Power Points. You get 100 to start off with, But these are not nearly enough. There is a reason for this however and a very good one it is to ! You can obtain more Power Points, if you agree to have the same ammount of points in Character Disadvantages.

If you are a comic buff, you will no doubt know that all heroes have weaknesses as well as strengths; both are necessary to an interesting, well rounded character. They also give the GM interesting ideas for adventures, giving them a wide scope for that all important 'Cringe Factor'.

Disadvantages range from anything from Beserk, which means that your character can't distinguish between friends and foe in combat, to Unusual looks, which can range from startling, to downright hideous.

Once your character has been created, it is time to read the combat section. This is where the game totters slightly as it is quite involved and time consuming. On the positive side it is quite realistic and covers all possible outcomes.

When you have read all this you are ready to play the game. Of course you'll need a Game Master (GM), to run and referee the game, as well as a few other players. The GM is well catered for in the rulebook, with a whole section dedicated to running a campaign.

Also included are five adventures, one of which is very small and can be played solo. To balance this up there is a large, involved adventure involving the clearance of a sinister organisations' headquarters.

To quote the designers of the game: ''The main object of the game is for the players and GM to have fun'.I totally agree, and so those more serious minded roleplayers should give this game a wide birth.

► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	7
► PRESENTATION	5
► COMPLEXITY	7
► OVERALL	8

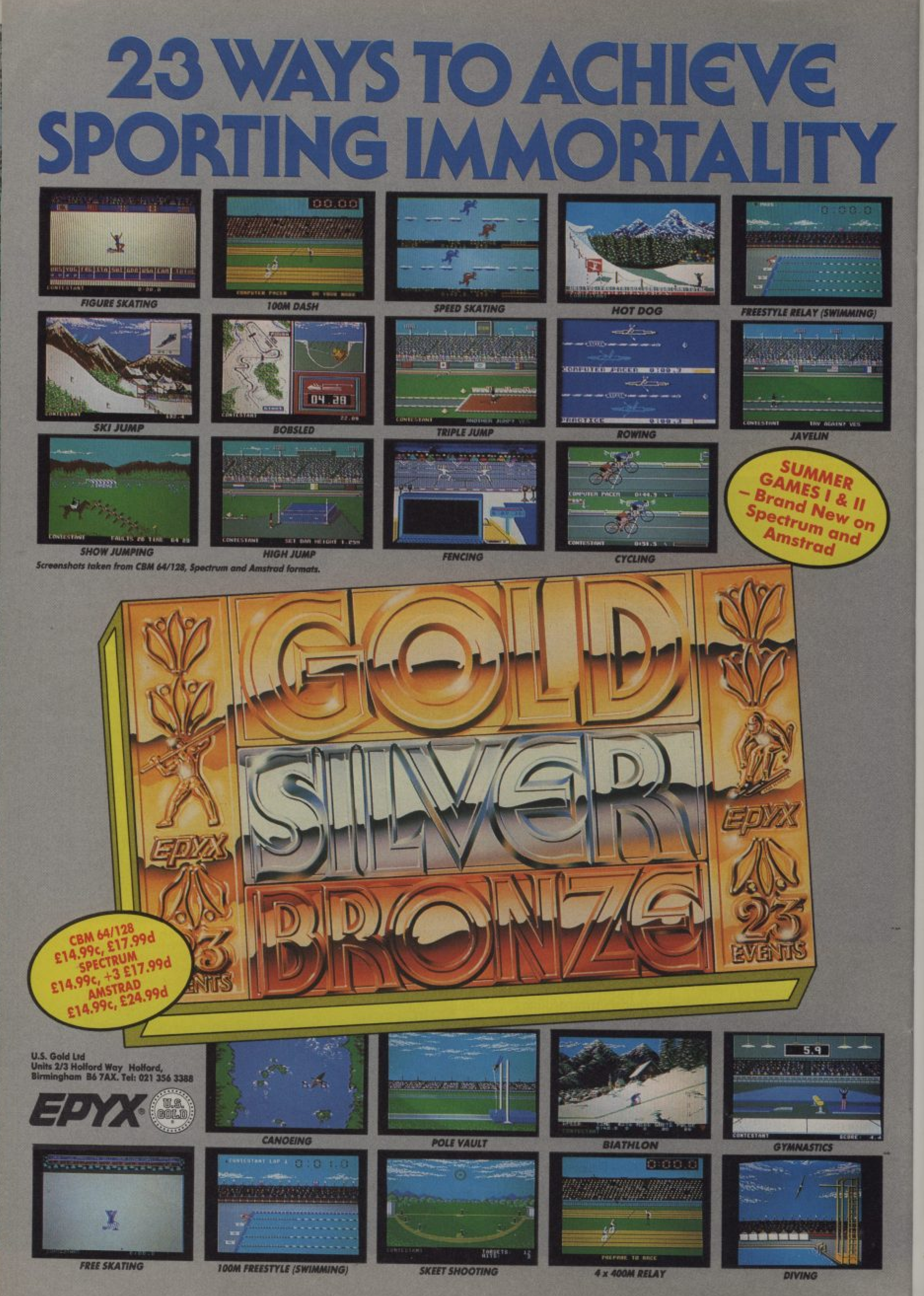
Letters

My friends I have been reading your FRP column with interest, and have decided to take the plunge and get involved. However, we are not sure what to buy! There are loads of games available, but we want one which is sword and scorcery based and simple to play. What do you recommend.
Gary Horesham,
Blackpool.

Dragonroar **which is revealed this month, is well worth a look. TSR's** ***'Dungeons And Dragons'***, **(basic set) is the game which people usually start with, but you can always try GW's** ***'Runequest III'***, **which is slightly more complex. All games should be available in your local hobby store.**

I like to play Role Playing on my Atari ST and I am having a great time playing *Dungeonmaster* at the moment. However, I am very close to finishing it and will be at a loss as to what to play next!! Can you advise me on any other FRP games which are/will be available for my type of computer?
A. Tomlinson,
Poole.

Shadowgate **is the only new FRP-ish game on the market at the moment. It is a bit Adventure-ish, but is quite interesting in places and very addictive. There is also the** ***Ultima*** **series issued by Origin, which have a large FRP bias. However, the computer FRP market is waiting with baited breath for the release of computerized** ***AD + D***, **which is a combined release by TSR/US Gold and SSI. It has really great potential and if it lives up to its pre-release material, it should be bigger than** ***Dungeonmaster***. **Keep reading C + VG for further exclusive details.**


23 WAYS TO ACHIEVE SPORTING IMMORTALITY
FIGURE SKATING
100M DASH
SPEED SKATING
HOT DOG
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SKEET SHOOTING
4 x 400M RELAY
DIVING

Fantasy Role-Playing

news

Games Workshop has been very busy recently issuing a veritable mountain of gaming accessories.

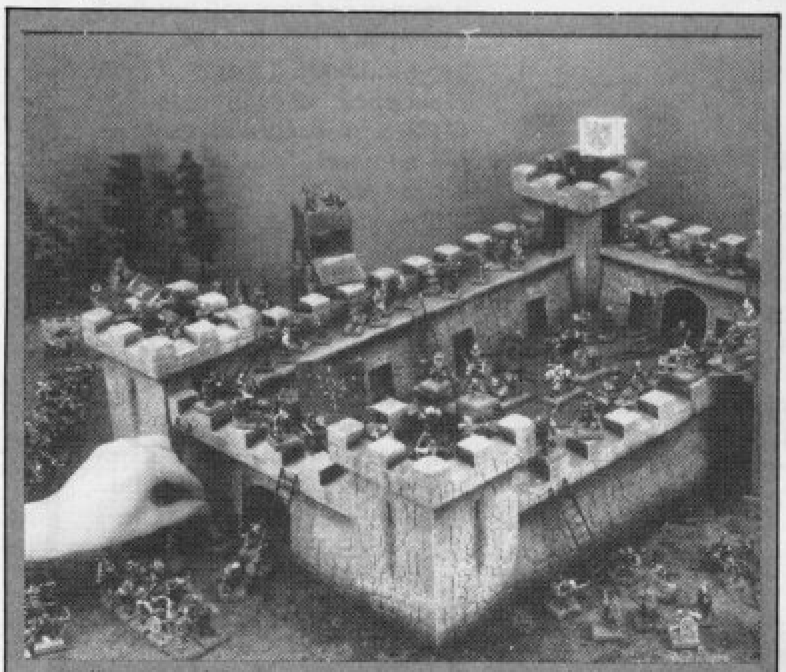
It's biggest, and I mean this literally, recent release must be the Mighty Fortress. Standing at over six inches high and over two feet square the fortress is a formidable structure. It has been made specifically to cater for your miniature figures (25mm) and you can use it for whatever historical period you desire.

It is made of reinforced, high density polystyrene and designed in such a manner so that you can assemble it in what ever fashion you desire without the aid of glue. This means that you can rebuild it over and over again, to suit your specific gaming needs.

The fortress comes in a realistic textured stone grey colour, but you can enhance it if you wish with the aid of water-based paints. It contains four square towers, four wall sections, and two wall sections with gateways.

In addition you get a large selection of plastic doors, ladders, trapdoors, gates and flagpoles, which are all decorated in an imitation wood finish.

It sells for around £20.00, which is a bit steep, but there is no other fortress on the market. Furthermore, GW are selling them as fast as they are making them, so if anyone is interested in buying one it could be a wise move to contact them direct.



▲ *Fully painted Giant Fortress.*

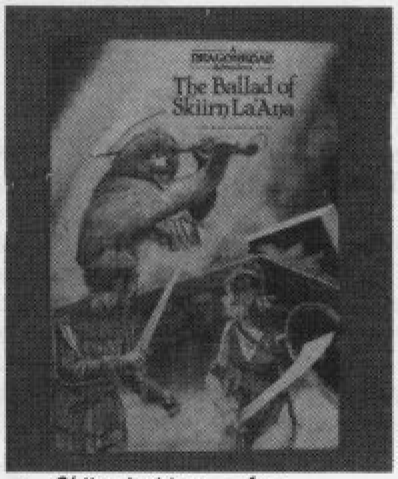
GW has also issued a couple of products to accompany its *Warhammer 40,000* space role playing game. The new space marines come in blister packs and sell at £2.50. You get three metal marines to a pack plus various accessories such as standards, weapons and other offensive devices.

There are six new variations of model and their poses differ from model to model. Most of them are in action stances, with such weapons as bolt throwers, chain swords and other hand held weapons. A must for any serious *Warhammer 40,000* player.

Talking of "musts" the *Rhino* is a deadly fighting machine from the battlefields of *Warhammer 40,000,* which any dedicated player will miss at their peril.

The *Rhino* is the mode of transport used by space marines. It is a frightening version of a modern day armoured fighting vehicle and is a very nasty piece of work, bristling with offensive armoury.

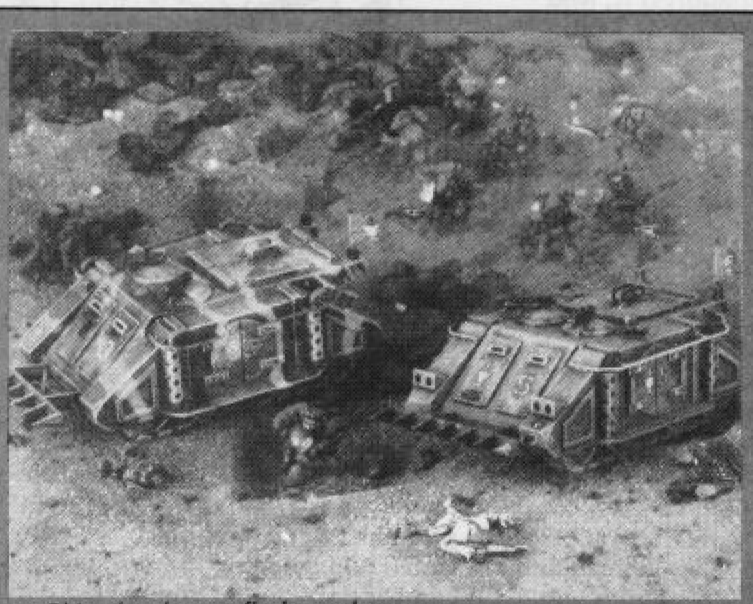
For around £10 you get three rhinos, which are all moulded in top quality plastic. The models are highly detailed and come complete with multi-option body sections,



▲ *Skiirn La'Ana – for experienced players only.*

optional hatches, smoke launchers, spiked ram attachments, hand rails and lighting equipment. You have many different options as to how you construct them.

Some modelling skill is essential as the Rhino's must be constructed using modelling glue. However, full assembly instructions are included along with painting instructions and a sheet of full colour transfers.



▲ *Rhino battle cars flush out the enemy.*



▲ *Space Marines – 4 for £2.50.*

Standard Games has also had its nose to the grindstone. The company recently released two accessories to accompany their *Dragonroar* range (see this month's review).

Zhevezh Gauntlet will test the skills of even the toughest players. Based around the town of Tutub, the adventurers have many options for excitement and action. Included in the package is a booklet fully detailing the various non-player characters, more dungeon floor plans and new counters. There is also a new adventure cassette, which is for solo play.

The Ballad Of Skiirn La'ana is another Dragonroar adventure, which leans more towards stretching the old grey matter than actual hack and slay. However, adventurers will need to keep their swords handy as there are some formidable new monsters, namely the Khlamin, which is a rock monster that flies!! Also the viscious War hedgehogs are on the loose . . .

Play By Mail

There have been big happenings in the PBM world this month. Mitre Games has gone bust, a couple of other PBM companies have taken over its products and Sloth Enterprises is giving away free rulebooks and re-introducing the concept of discounts for bulk turns purchased.

The PBM news of the month, if not the year, must be that Mitre Games, one of Europe's largest PBM's companies, has gone into volentary liquidation.

So where does that leave the players who have a substantial ammount of money invested in the company, in the form of turn credits? Well, it all depends which Mitre PBM you played.

Midgard Players: The European rights to Midgard have been sold off to a company called Mid-Games, which is based in the USA. It is run by Bill Fawcett and Eric Ziemer, and they have agreed to honour all credit that UK players have accumulated. Apart from the inconvienience of playing the game across the Atlantic, Mid Games say that, economics aside, they will continue to run the game in the same vein as Mitre, without any radical changes. If you wish to contact them their address is; Mid Games, PO Box 268050, Chicago, Ill, 60626.

Global Supremacy Jade Games has snapped up the rights to this game and it should be up and running at this moment. Like Mid Games, they will honour all credit that players have in their accounts. Unlike Mid Games, they believe that they can make a considerable improvement to the game and they are striving to introduce a more realistic element into it. Anyone interested in playing *Supremacy* should note that new startup positions cost £5.00, with turn fees starting at £2.40 and rising depending on the number of actions you perform. It would appeal to any readers interested in contemporary wargaming.

Please note that whilst these two companies will honour your credit in the form of turns,they are not able to give cash refunds on monies owed.

Tribes of Crane : It would appear that no one has shown very much interest in this game, and as I write, its rights are still unsold. The only recourse I can advise to players who have credit held here is to get in touch with Mitre's receiver, who will be dividing up and allocating the money that is avalable.

Turning now to happier news. The BPMA's Great Northern PBM convention is well under way.

It is taking place at Sheffield Polytechnic on Saterday 15/10/88 between 10 and 6pm. All the major PBM companies have been invited, along with certain Fantasy Role Playing organisations. Live role playing (demonstrations and participation), computer games and quizzes, competitions and a' bring and buy' auction have all been arranged.

Tickets usually cost £2.00, but any C + VG reader who writes to ; The BPMA, 2, David Court, 200 Lansdown Rd, London, N17 9XW, can get them for £1.50.

Sloth Enterprises has obtained the rights to run the Australian Created PBM, Spiral Arm II. The game is one of space empire creation and involves the usual ammount of space combat, interplanetary colonisation and trading.

Spellbinder Games also have the rights to run the same you can play game. This means the game with the company you prefer. Sloth, however, have come across with a novel idea on how to market the game.

Basically, the rule book, start up and first two turns are free, so all you *C + VG* readers who are interested in playing the game, drop me a SSAE at *C + VG* and I will arrange for the start up package to be sent.

Sloth is looking for GM's, so if you fancy living in Southampton and have good handwriting, some computer skills, a couple of O Levels (or equivalent), plus an active imagination, then pass the details to me and I will notify Sloth.

Finally, this month I would like to report on a few games that are worth playing from America. Playing PBM in the States is easy and enjoyable. The post takes about eight days door-to-door, and most of the games have long fixed deadlines. Money is paid in ordinary UK cheques that are written in Dollars and Cents. It doesn't cost and arm and a leg, so is well worth a try, even if you just learn from experience.

One thing you should bear in mind though is that our colonial cousins go in for computer-moderated games in a big, big way. Over there time is money and you will not find a company that deals in hand-moderated games. experience. So be prepared to fill in turn sheets with quite a few numbers, to achieve the desired results.

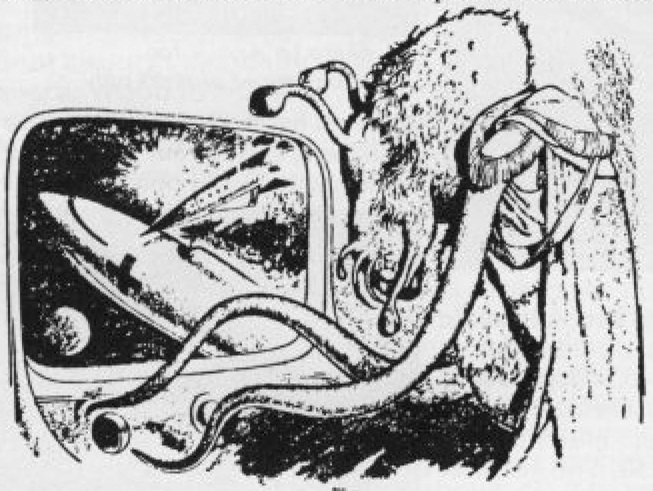
Two games run from the USA that I can recommend are the following: *Warp Forces Empire* is a sci-fi game of combat and exploration.

You start off with a planet under your control just as your population is venturing into space exploration. Where you go from here is up to you.

The owner of Enterprise Games Systems, Steve Gray, is a very pleasant, reliable chap, who is only too willing to answer your initial enquiries.

However, before you bother him see if you like the game first. Simply write to me with a SSAE and I will arrange for a leaflet to be sent to you.

Duelmasters is a game of gladiatorial combat fought in an arena between two characters, where you play the owner of a team of warriors that number up to five. You then write down how your warriors are armed, what armour they wear, and how they will fight, what style they will use, what tactics they will adopt and what other warrior you want to challenge. You then get back a computer print-out of the flight that is first divided into minutes and then sub-divided into a blow by blow account of the descriptive action. Dependent on how well you do, you rise or fall in the gladitorial table. The aim is to become the *Duelmaster* which is the top person in the game and means you play for free. Anyone interested should forward an international reply coupon or cheque to C + VG for $2.50 payable to "Reality Simulations Inc" and I will pass it on.



▲ *Warp forces Empire – U.S. PBM Invasion.*

COMPETITION RESULTS!

DAY OUT IN A FERRARI

Jane Frewer from Broadstone in Dorset was the "lucky" winner who gets to be driven around by Eugene Lacey for a day. The consolation prize is that it's in a Ferrari, so the day shouldn't be that bad.
She impressed the judges by the fact that she'd just done a 9,000 word project on the famous sportscars, and that she was a girlie, and we don't get many of them entering our competitions.

ROCKET RANGER/ B MOVIE

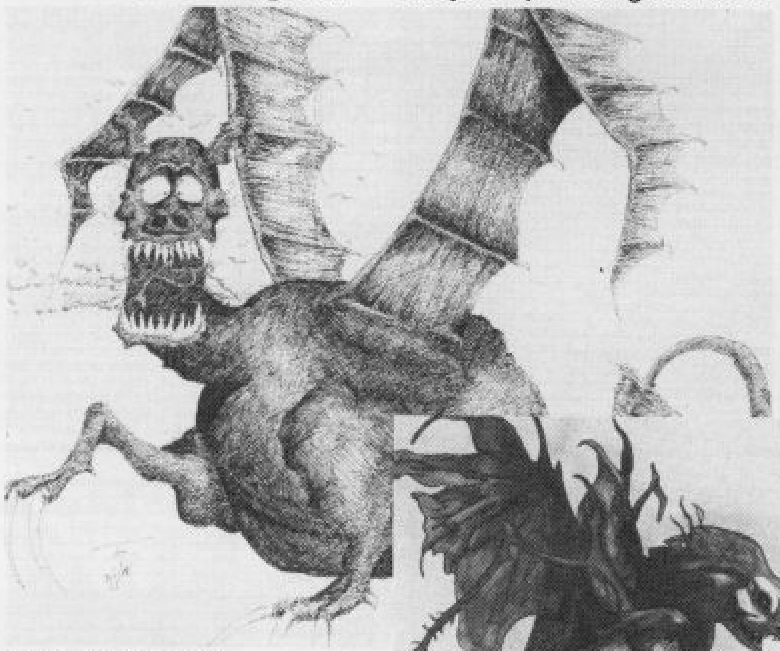
W. Craigens from Middlesborough stormed into first place with his suggestion for a B movie title – "Frankenstein Ate My Virgin Granny on Wheels." If you think that's bad, you should see the rest of them! He gets a free day at Alton towers.

MR D.J ROBOT RADIO

Winner of the Mr D.J robot radio was Gareth Dew from Bridgwater in Somerset, who was the first out of the hat to correctly tell us that the name of the robot in the film *Forbidden Planet* was "Robby". He should have received his prize, ooh, ages ago.

BITMAP BROTHERS

Darren Bilham from King's Lynn won the Bitmap remote control model aeroplane which was first prize, with these correct answers. The Wright brothers were the famous flight pioneers, the assassinated US politicians were the Kennedys and the suit billionaires were Moss Bros. Runners up who win Xenon games are Cameron Hogg of Stoke on Trent, John Parchment of Clapham, London, Daniel Cregin from Newcastle, Jon Christian Hartley from Blackburn, Rafael Ssabater from Earl's Court, London, Alistair May from Moray in Scotland, Adam White from Leeds, Joseph Old from Padstow, Cornwall, Ranjadh Grewal from Northampton and S.P. Howells from Birmingham.



▲ *By Karl Hornell.*

And no, I'm not going to explain to you the last answer – "What is a bit-map?". We had all sorts of answers, but if you want to know you'll have to look it up!

BLACK LAMP COMPETITION

April also ran a Black Lamp competition to win five metal model dragons. This was an art compo with a very healthy number of entries, but the five winners were: Karl Hornell from Sweden, Morgan Eves from Norwich, Jokell Freyr Svanarsson (I hope I got that right!) from Iceland, Nicholas Young from Saddleworth in Lancs and Allan Batchelor from Tottenham, North London.

Runners up who get Black Lamp games are Alan Wan, Lee Bullock, Luke Liller, Richard Knights, D. Smith, "GYS", E. Wardlaw, Thomas Hearn and Marko Svominen fron Finland, heroes all.

TALLY HO COMPETITION

June's Tally Ho/ Gee Bee Air Rally competition got a whole



▲ *By Morgan Eves.*

heap of silly and often downright unintelligible suggestions for the photo caption. These ranged from "Okay, which clever bastard nailed my scarf to the propellor?" (J. Round from Nottinghamshire) to, "Twist the other end and black pepper comes out here," from P. Young of Huddersfield. Other flying Jacket winners are Matti Kennedy from Cornwall, Steve Cooper from Somerset and Kevin Hutchinson from Sheffield.

And last but not least in this batch of winners comes the Roadblasters/US Gold coin op winner.

He is John Wood of Wednesbury in the west Midlands who will soon be annoying family and neighbours alike with his new coin op. The winning rhyme?

"The engine revs
On new locations,
to rid the road
Of vile creations
Playing cool
And driving faster,
Burn the streets
Like a real Roadblaster!"

GRAFFITI COMPETITION

At last the winner of the Graffiti competition run with Maynard International last year sometime can be revealed. He is Chris Green from Bexleyheath in Kent, who pips Nick Adams and Steve Bain to the post with his epic wall painting, and gets to go to New York for his troubles.

PRISONER COMPETITION

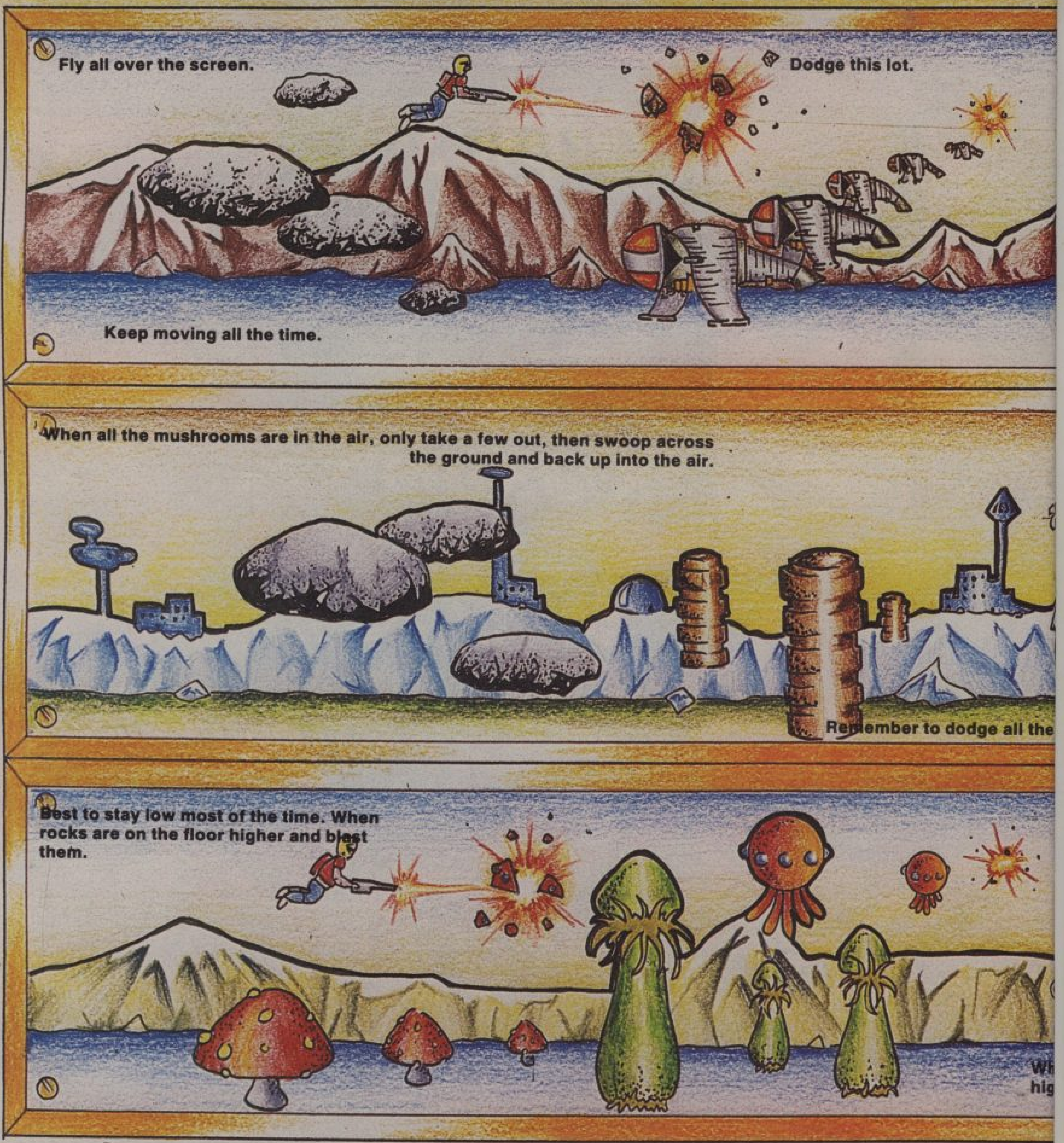
Back in February we asked the name of the Prisoner (Number six) and the previous series starred in by Patrick McGoohan (Danger Man). The winner of a set of videos of this classic series was Patrick McTeggart from County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland.

EYE COMPETITION

The Eye competition was an artwork one for which we got a load of really good entries, but unfortunately only one winner. That winner, as chosen by the *C + VG* art department was Richard Jepson, age 10, from Rotherham in South Yorkshire. He gets an eye board game, a computer game and various goodies. Well done!

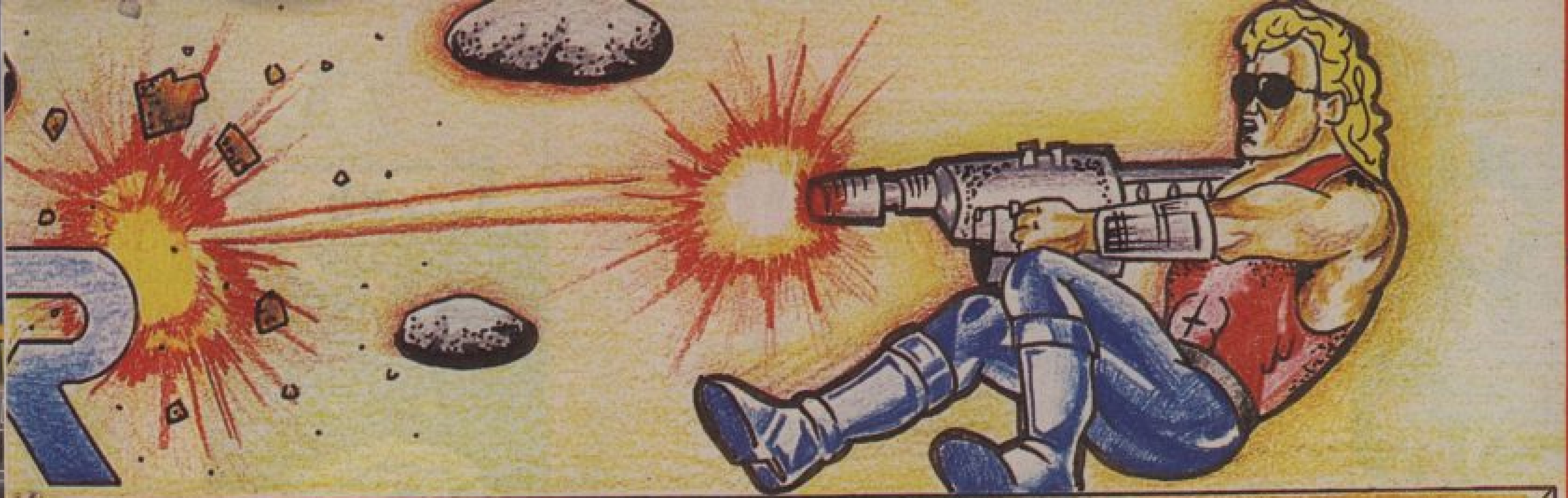

PSYGNOSIS
MIRROR
Soft
RAINBIRD
T'R'I'A'D

SPACE HARRIER

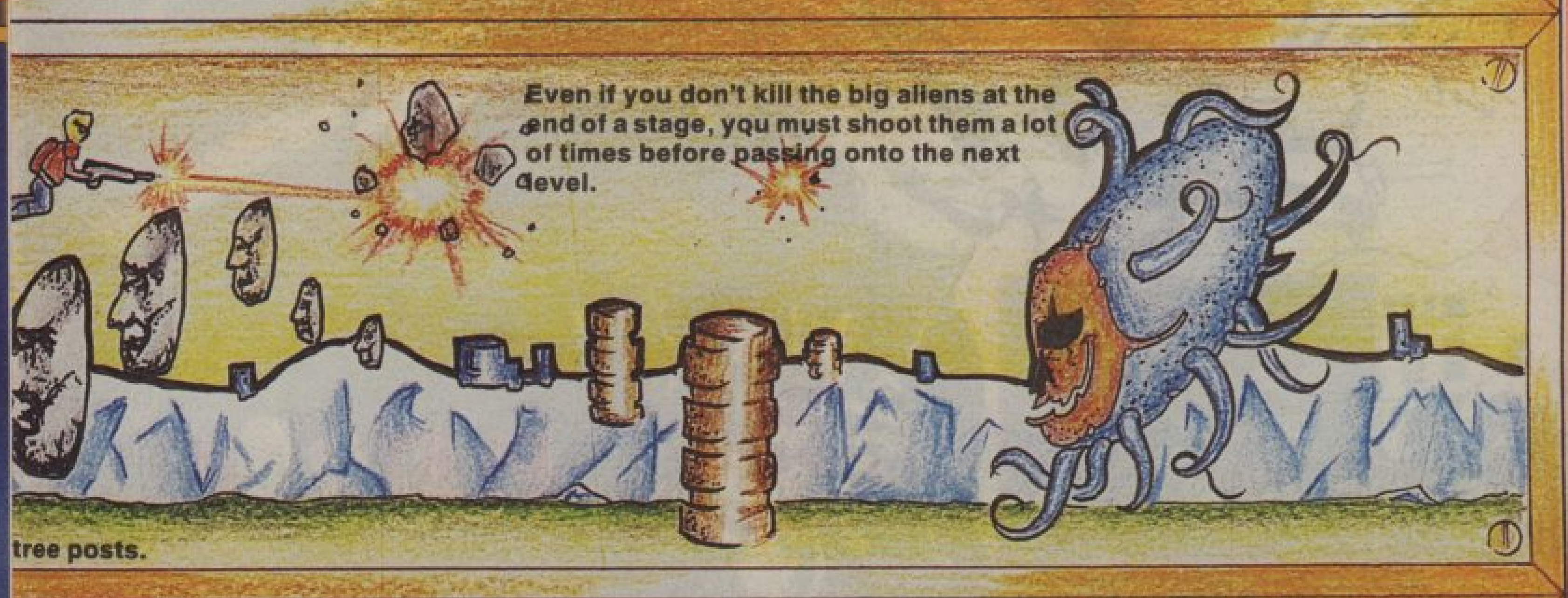


Space Harrier is now available on the ST. Here's a map of the first three levels to get you going, plus some hints and tips direct from Elite.

Stage 4: Very fast level; and it is very solid; it has loads of posts very close together, this needs very good, fast reactions, and it is very useful to go from left to right all the time, using the auto-fire.
Stage 5: This is a "Bonus Stage"; all you do is wait until a Hamster comes along and wait until you are on his back. Then control him over the screen, smashing into everything you see.









age 6: Just keep out of the way of the Steel poles and dodge the lls which the Hockey Players "whak" at you.
age 7: Very tough level at the start. When objects in the air ay on the ground but fire when there aren't too many. Stay out of e way of the Faces, they come too fast. Keep crossing the screen last a while longer.

Stage 8: Have auto-fire on and move all over the screen, blowing up everything in sight.
Stage 9: Very, very fast level; it is very full of obstacles and is very hard.
Stage 10: Not reached.



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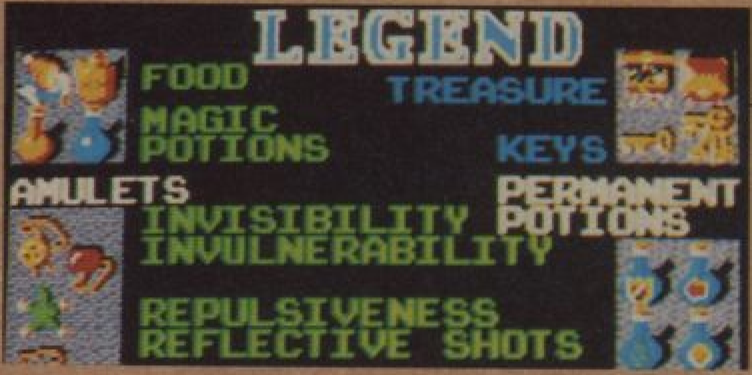

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Play Masters

There are two ways of playing Gauntlet: the smash 'n' grab method where you pile into the fray without any regard for your health, or the stealth mission where time, patience and skill are used to amass the highest score possible. If you prefer the former method of play, turn the page. If the latter is more your style, read on.

Although there are four characters to choose from, solo players are best advised to pick either Merlin the Wizard or Thyra the Valkyrie.

Merlin is naturally gifted with magic powers, and his magic shots and prowess with potions make him an excellent fighter. However,



he has little armour, and therefore can only be recommended to skilled players who are adept at avoiding the less-than-amorous attentions of the dungeon hordes. Thyra is ideal for less experienced players, as she is endowed with body armour and has reasonable magic powers.



MONSTERS

type
GHOST
GRUNT
DEMON
LOBBER
SORCERER
DEATH
ACID PUDDLE
SUPER SORCERER
IT
DRAGON

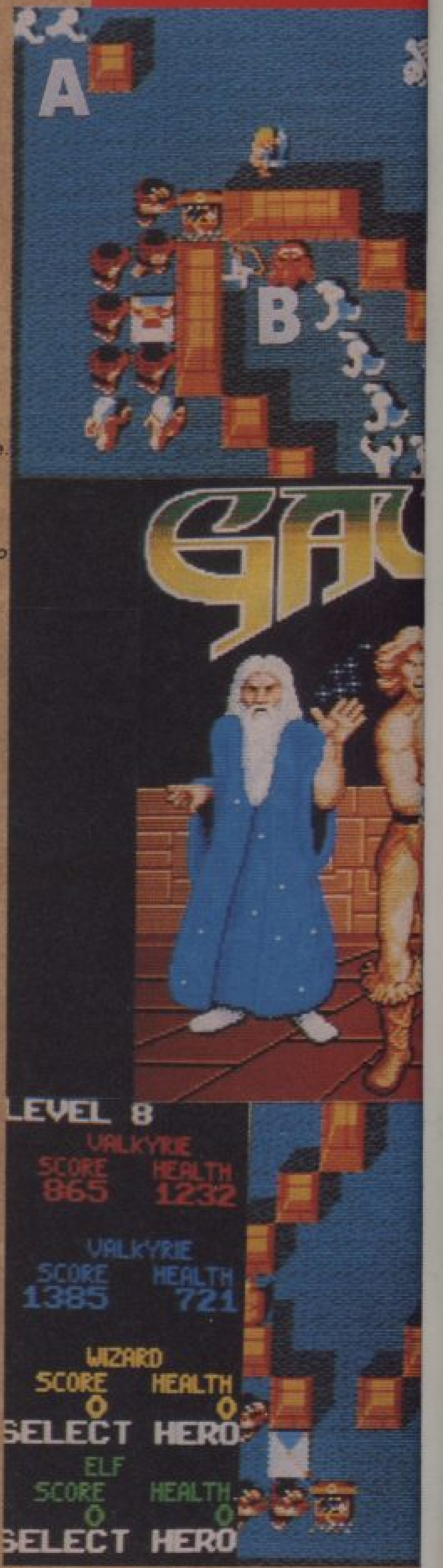
type	fight	shoot	magic
GHOST	NO	YES	YES
GRUNT	YES	YES	YES
DEMON	YES	YES	YES
LOBBER	YES	YES	YES
SORCERER	YES	YES	YES
DEATH	NO	NO	YES
ACID PUDDLE	NO	NO	STUN
SUPER SORC	NO	YES	STUN
IT	NO	STUN	NO
DRAGON	NO	YES	STUN

The key to the game is keeping your health level up. Running around blundering into everything isn't the best way of conserving energy — carefully does it. The priority targets are the monster generators. Take one of these out as soon as possible, otherwise the screen will quickly fill with marauding monsters. A useful tactic is to think ahead. When you're wandering through a maze, destroy everything you can on the other side of the wall by shooting through the gaps. This means that when you reach the other side there won't be anything nasty lying in wait.

Monsters always advance towards you in a straight line, so if you can put a wall or obstacle between you and them, they won't be able to approach. With clever positioning, you can actually shoot past a wall with monsters behind it, destroying them without fear of them touching you.

Always watch out for food; if it's a cider bottle be careful you don't shoot it — it's better to battle a couple of monsters hand-to-hand to reach some food, rather than risk blasting it. The same goes for potions.

Ghosts, grunts, lobbers and sorcerers are easily dealt with — blast 'em to bits. Demons are dispatched in a similar way, but care should be taken to avoid their health-sapping gobs of fire. The IT monster is no trouble to a solo player (monsters chase after you anyway) but acid pools and Death are. Acid pools can't be shot, and have to be avoided (stepping into one knocks off 50 health points).



POSITION A
● Positioning the character correctly behind this wall means that the generator and monsters can be destroyed without them being able to touch you.

POSITION B
● A super shot amulet — collect this after you've cleared the maze.

POSITION C
● Shoot through these two gaps to destroy the generators behind the wall.

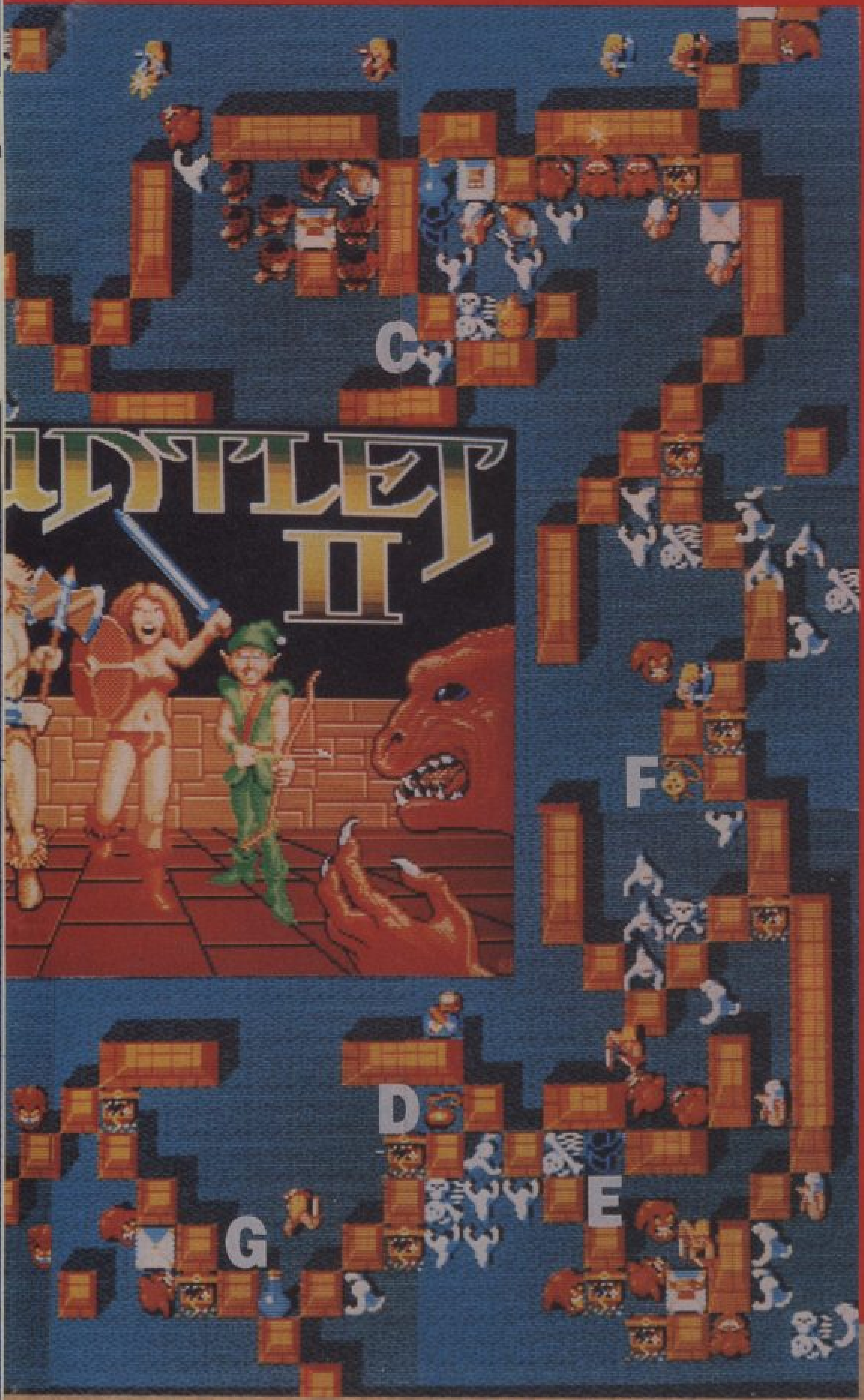
POSITION D
● Reflective Shots amulet. Don't collect this if a 'shots hurt other players' message has appeared at the start of the screen — you could end up blasting yourself!

POSITION E
● Blast Death with a potion — otherwise pick up the invisibility amulet (F) and rush past.

POSITION F
● Invisibility potion — watch it, its effects tend to run out at the most inopportune moments!

POSITION G
● Potions are vital Collect it — don't shoot it.

GAUNTLET II

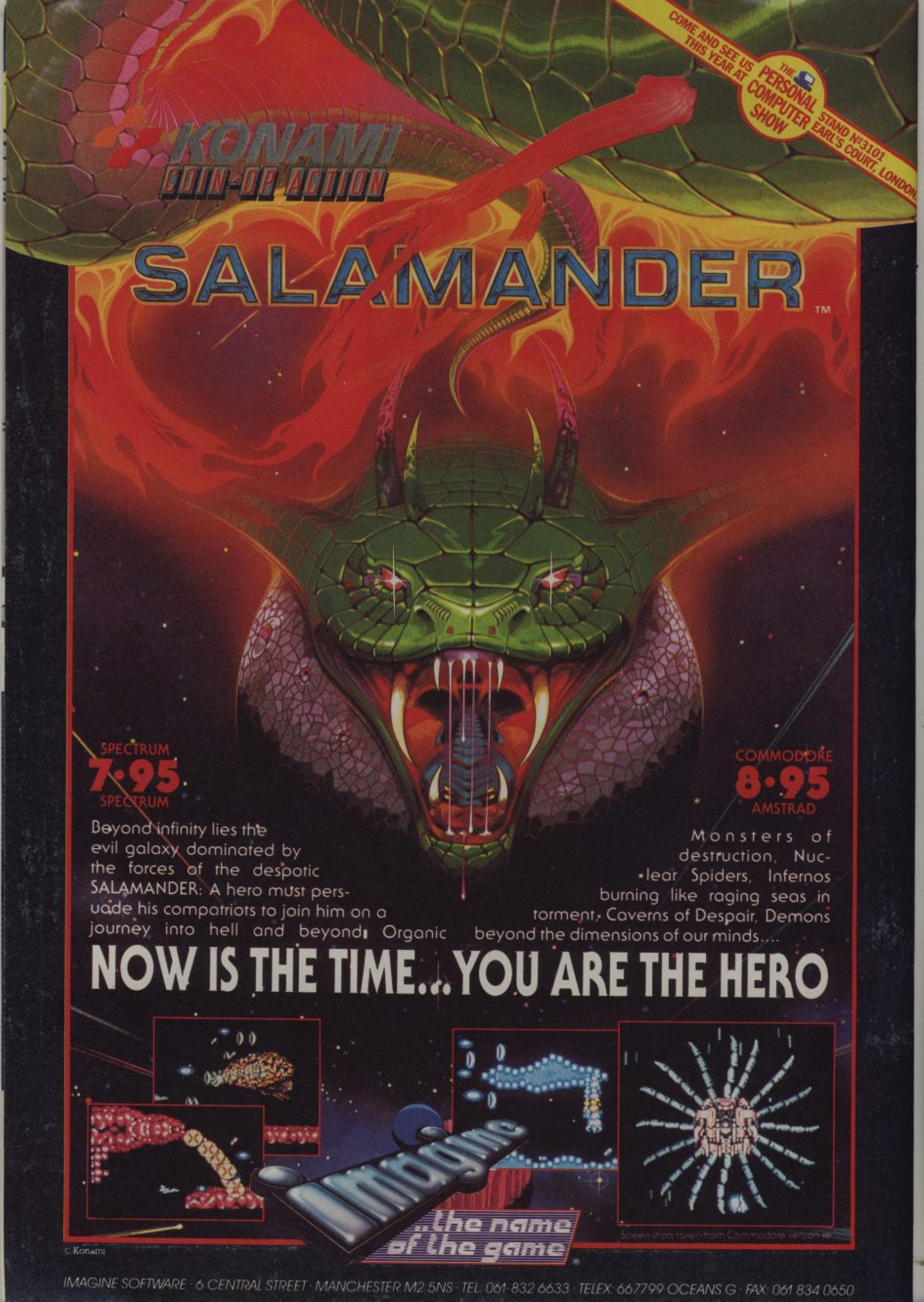


Deaths are deadly and can only be destroyed by potions, so don't waste them.

Dragons are the most dangerous of the dungeon inhabitants. They appear rarely, but nearly always bar the way to the exit. The only way of destroying a dragon is to hit it repeatedly on the head. Timing is critical, as it sways from side to side making it difficult to get a shot on target. All the while it spews fire, so speed is also of the essence. Never approach too near a dragon — to do so is suicidal. It does take practice to destroy dragons, but don't be disheartened, it IS possible. If you don't succeed after repeated attempts, you could always wimp out and summon another character to do the dirty work!

Amulets are all very useful apart from transportability, which makes playing the game very difficult indeed.

There's a secret room hidden in the game, and it's packed full of potions, amulets and other goodies. It can be accessed in a variety of ways, but the best thing to do is save super shots. Don't collect super shots until you've completely cleared a dungeon, then retrace your steps, pick up all the super shot amulets you missed and go to the exit without pressing the fire button. Keep collecting super shots in this fashion and you'll eventually enter the secret room. Entrances to the secret room are also hidden in the walls of some mazes — but they're very difficult to find. If you discover any other ways of getting into the secret room, write in to Playmasters.


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PlayMasters

Welcome to *Playmasters.* Julian Rignall here with all the latest hints, tips and POKEs for your machines. Over the next few months I'll be reshaping and developing the Playmasters section to turn it into THE definitive tips section, with the hottest maps, listings and POKES that are guaranteed to work, and the best cheats and hints.



The best news this month is that I've got software to give away to the senders of the best tips of the month. So send in your maps, hints, POKEs – or anything you think could help fellow games players – to: Julian Rignall, Playmasters, C + VG, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AD. You never know, you could well win yourself a bundle of software for your computer. By the way, when you write, don't forget to say which machine your tips are for.

Coming up this month is a solution to the final level of *Dungeon Master,* a *Space Harrier* map and some superb tips for *Gauntlet II* – get playing!

NEMESIS

This is an old tip, but might be useful for those who've just bought Ocean's Konami Collection. Load Nemesis, on the title screen press down the SHIFT LOCK key and press SPACE four times to cycle through all the player options and bring you back to player one. Start the game and you'll be invincible, allowing you to knock up a totally ridiculous highscore.

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

If you've been playing this glorified *Space Invaders* game and haven't got very far, take heed of the advice sent in by Craig Allcock of Salford, Lancs. – he's sent in the access codes to all levels.

1 Electra, 2 Syzygy, 3 Drambuie, 4 Plug, 5 Soprano, 6 Mayonnaise, 7 Faucet, 8 Potato, 9 Woomera, 10 Nacissus, 11 Debutante, 12 Firkin, 13 Acoustic, 14 Triptych, 15 Jabberwocky, 16 Whimsical, 17 Cornucopia, 18 Punjabi, 19 Tiddly Pom, 20 Kewpie Doll, 21 Sepulchre, 22 Euphemism, 23 Grammarian, 24 Crossword, 25 Quarantine.

DARK SIDE

Here are some tips for budding explorers, sent in by Incentive themselves – nice people indeed!

The first thing to do is disable three or four ECD's which slows down the timer – otherwise you'll find yourself running out of time long before the mission is complete.

If you're in need of fuel, make repeated contact with fuel rods in any store area to replenish supplies. If it's shield energy you require, make contact with the Pentagon-shaped power points.

To enter the ovehead walkway, simply shoot the rod above the door repeatedly. It should spin, so keep on blasting until the door slides open. Blasting radar beacons prevents you from being thrown into jail.

If you touch a telepod crystal, it is positioned in the centre console within the telepod. If you then enter the telepod, shoot the crystal and then leave the telepod, you'll find yourself in a new area.

Apparently you can 'buy' your way out of confinement by lasering the slots in the pillars. Energy is expended, but you'll soon be free.

CARRIER COMMAND

No signs of the 8-bit versions yet, but apparently they're on the way. Still, 16-bit players should find the following tips very useful – they were compiled by Realtime, the programmers of the game, so they must be good!

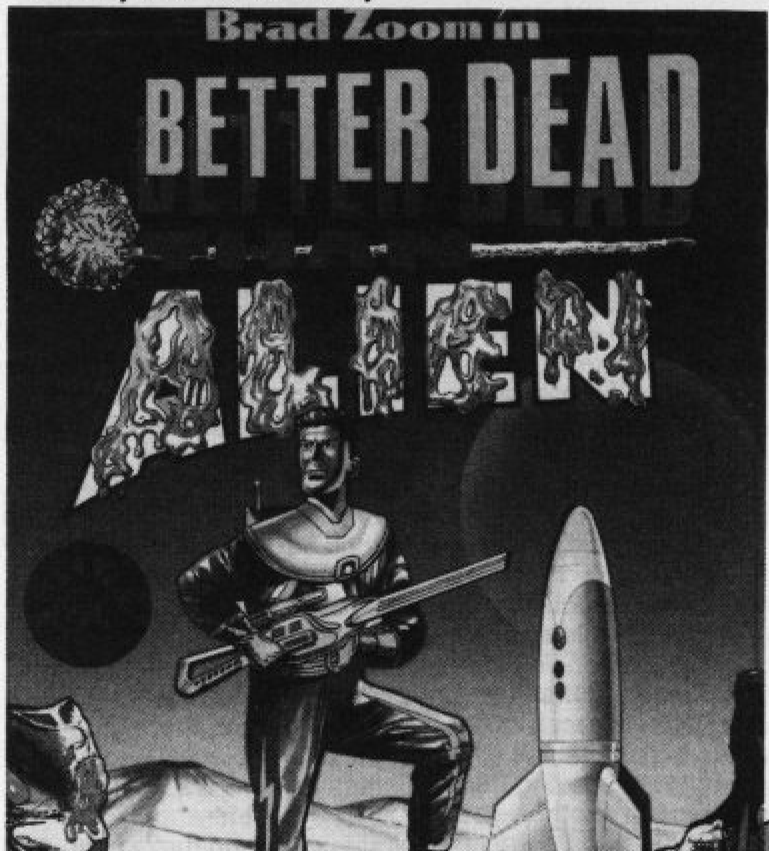
When you reach an enemy island, get as close as you can without grounding and turn the carrier around by 180°, so you can hit island installations using surface-to-surface missiles.

Don't try to and destroy the Marauders one by one, as there can be up to 40 stationed in a silo (known as a Batcave) at once. When a Marauder is launched, it's fully refuelled and armed with three seek-and-destroy missiles. Take out the Batcave, and then hunt down and destroy the remaining Marauders – or just wait for them to run out of fuel. Remember that the Command centre on the island immediately starts to repair anything you've blown up.

Marauders don't ever leave the vicinity of the island, so if you want to destroy a Batcave, fly around the island avoiding the Marauders until you're close enough to the Batcave, and take it out.

Volcanic islands are always good sources of fuel – so always turn them into resource islands.

Do you know that you can land a Manta on an enemy airfield to refuel? Just make sure you destroy all missile launchers before they do!



▲ *Make sure you have the codes.*

Always have Virus bombs and ACCBs on high priority, as they're quite demanding on resources when being manucfactured. Always have the Automatic Repair Systems on high priority in the Damage Control Screen.

Factory islands and the Base island produce limited resources.

Regularly move the Stockpile island so that it's in range of the group of islands you're currently running a campaign against. Place defence islands at key positions in the island network, so that it's more difficult for the enemy carrier to break down the network.

Always repair Mantas and Walruses as soon as they return to the carrier.

Only refuel Mantas and Walruses with just enough fuel for the sortie. If they're destroyed, fuel won't be wasted.

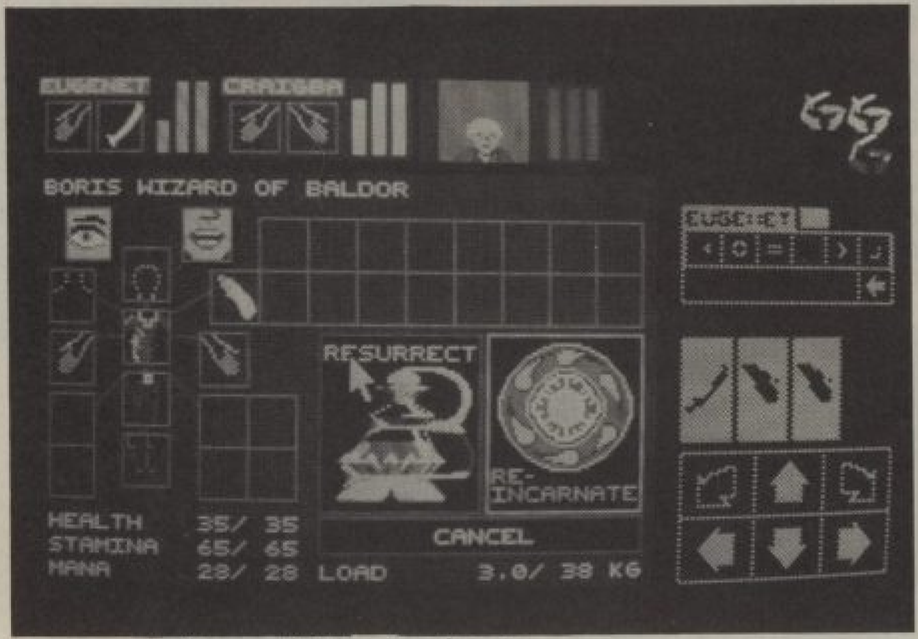
To move quickly between islands, dock all drones and don't leave a Manta on the flight deck, as this slows down the carrier. When you send the carier to another island, don't forget to recall all Walruses and Mantas to the carrier. While moving from one island to another, use the time to redesignate the settings on the Ste Priorities screen.

Always keep you Mantas and Walruses fully armed, even when in the hangar, as you'll be able to fit more supplies in the carrier's stores.

Make use of the head-up radar on Mantas and Walruses to spot incoming missiles early.

On reaching an enemy island, immediately launch a full complement of defence drones.

Before you reach an enemy island, send out a Manta as a reconnaissance scout to see what and where things are on the island.



▲ *You must kill the wizard to win.*

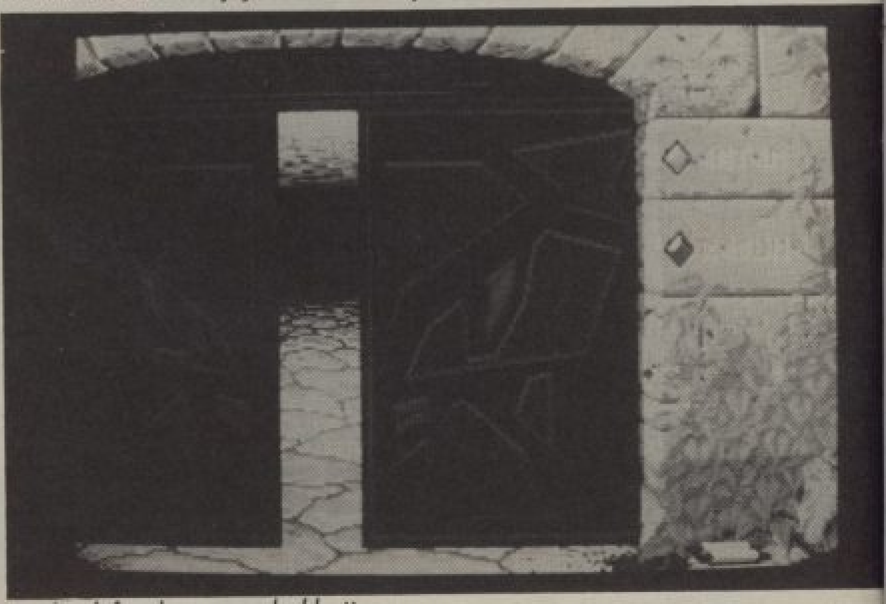
DUNGEON MASTER

Calling all *Dungeon Master* freaks. If you're having trouble battling through the last level, Richard Corns of Kingswinford, Swindon has just what you're looking for – a complete solution. Read through it first to familiarise yourself with what you've got to do before entering the dungeon – the last thing you what to do is have to refer back to this during a battle!

In dungeon eight (the one with the rats) there's a message which says 'When is rock not 'rock'. To the left of this message you can walk through the wall to get to a passage which has an invisible teleporter. Locate the concealed entrance by walking down the wall throwing objects. When an item disappears, you've found the entrance. Walk sideways and turn about. A giant rat appears but it can be dispatched using full-power fireballs.

Later on in the dungeon there's a concealed button. Find and press it and you'll activate a Storm Ring which shoots lightning. At the end of the dungeon there's a Ra . Don't leave without it.

In dungeon ten there's a corridor which goes round in a circle. To get past it walk around throwing objects at the wall. When an object disappears, turn around and walk back the way you came and you find yourself in a different location. Keep doing this to find your way out. When you've found a way out, back around carefully and you'll find a door. Open it to find a sword called The Fury which can shoot fireballs.



▲ *Look for the concealed button.*

Near to the steps which lead down from this dungeon there's a door – it's vital that you enter. On the wall there's an eye. Take an object and click it on the eye to open a secret passageway. Enter and you're transported to the Ruby Key. This must be used in the Tomb of the Firestaff.

In dungeon eleven there's a Ra Key and the Master key which is used to open the Firestaff door. Be careful here, as the dungeon is full of knights in chain mail which are very difficult to destroy.

When you've got both keys, go down stairs. There's a Wizard here, but don't pursue him as he's far too powerful to beat at the moment. Don't open the skeleton hole here – if you opened one on level seven, you'll be transported all the way back there.

Go to the Firestaff – you should be able to open all the doors with the Ruby Key – and open the door that says 'Enter with Caution'. Search around and you should be able to find a button. Go down the passage that apears and carefully check the left hand side. There's another button there; press it and go back to the first button, and nearby you'll discover a door. Open it and enter. On one of the walls there's an altar with ash on it, beneath which is a key. There's also a button located in the room; press it to get a Ra key and scrolls which tell you about the staff. Four doors can be opened with the ashkey, and behind each one is a magical item.

Use the Ra key found in the altar room to open the door with the star-shaped keyhole. Explore behind the door and you'll find the Firestaff. (it's behind the black door which is opened with the Master key.)

Go back to the level with the Wizard and you'll find a large room. Fall down any hole there and you'll find yourself in the dragon room. Under a pile of ash is a key. Pick it up, but be careful because if the dragon breathes fire, the entire party will be instantly frazzled.

Behind the door in the dragon room is a power gem. To free it from the spell use ZO + KATH + RA + XXXXXXXXXXXX. This produces a crystal with which you can touch the gem.

Go up the stairs to the room with the Wizard. Be extremely cautious here, as the room is packed with demons, and there's fire everywhere. Destroy all the demons and then face the Wizard himself. Surround him with fluxcages, and when you're sure that he's COMPLETELY surrounded, invoke a fuse, stand right next to him and use the fuse. If you've surrounded him correctly, he dies, and the quest is over.

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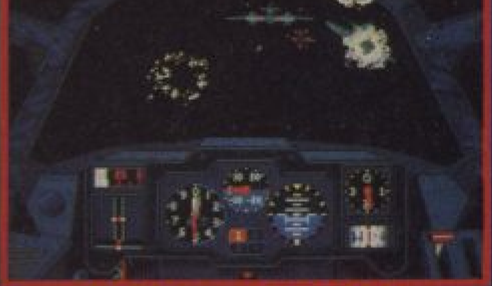
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NIGHT RAIDER

STRATEGY



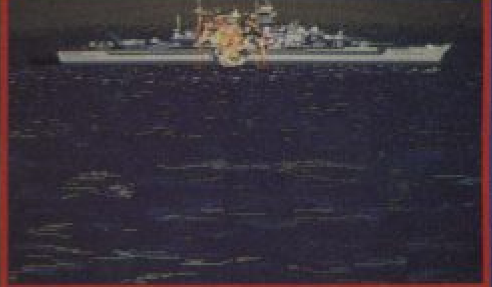
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Screen shots from Atari ST Version.

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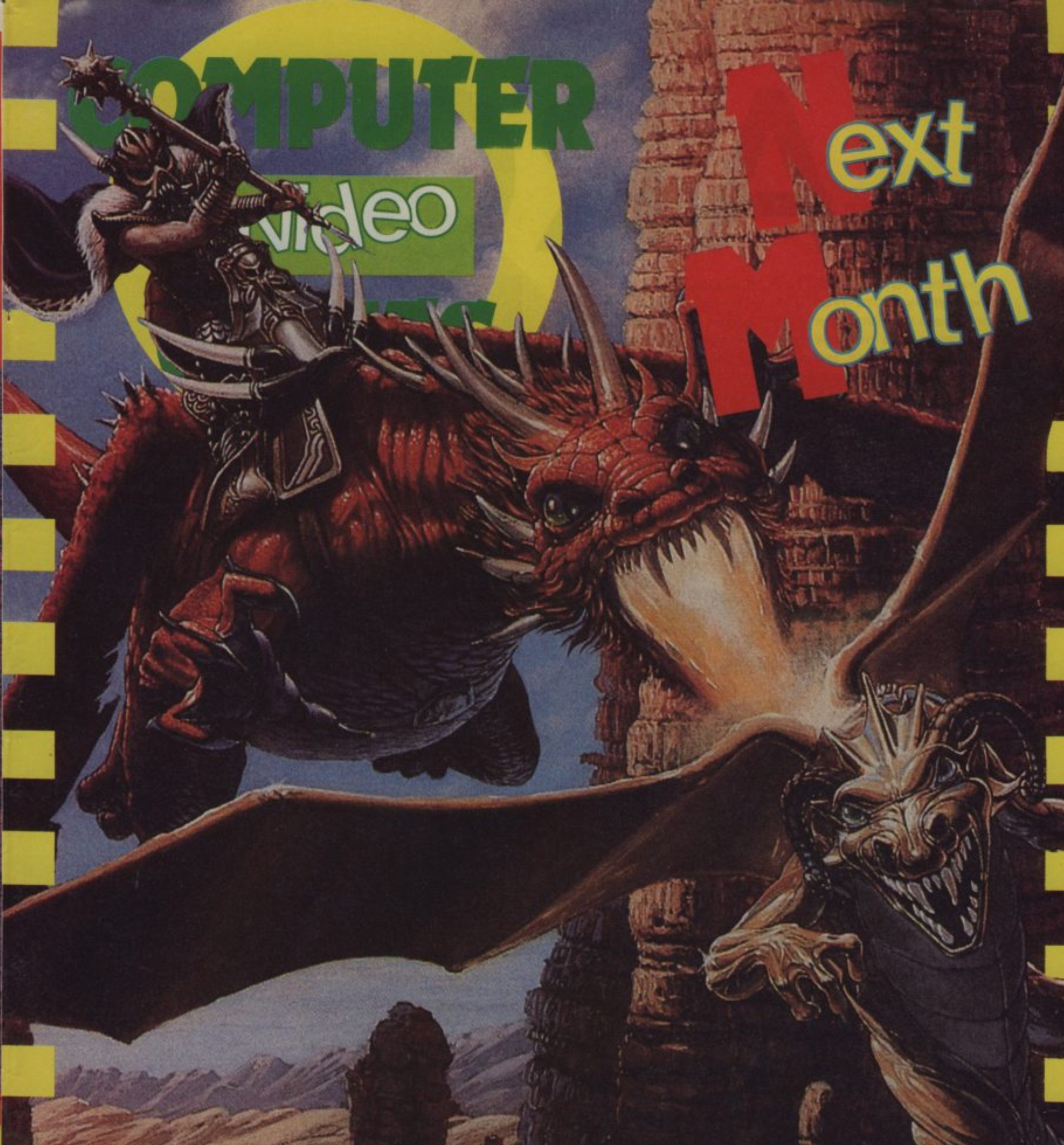
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1988 will go down in history as the year of the role playing game. RPGs are now big business and games giant US Gold is about to launch the biggest game of them all – Advanced Dungeons and Dragons for all computers. There are two games – a conventional PRG from S.S.I. and an original, more acadey game using AD&D characters. C + VG has exclusive reviews, a mega compo, and all your favourite regulars in our bumper PC Show issue.

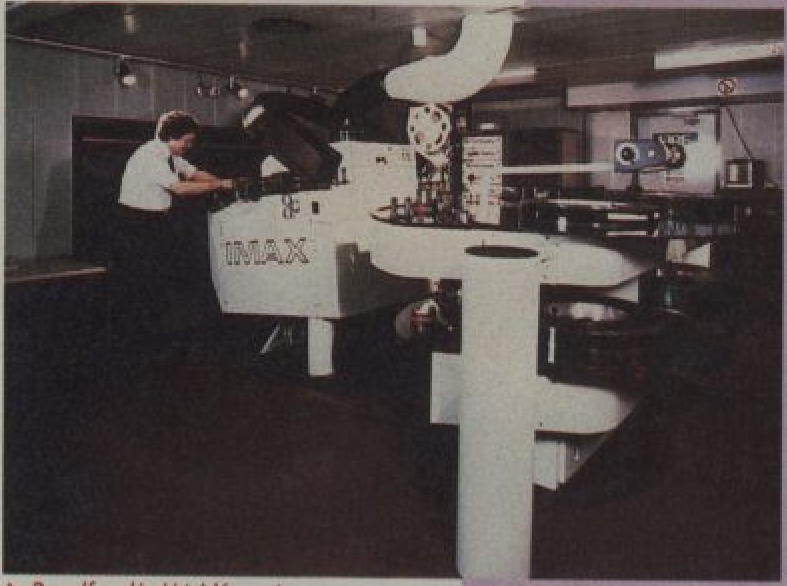
It's big and fat and the best value in gamesdom at £1.10.

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LARGER

You remember that famous bit at the beginning of Star Wars? The one where the giant Imperial Star Destroyer roars into view from the top of the screen, and seems like it's going to keep coming on forever. It was a magical piece of film-making, if perhaps cheapened by a thousand small screen showings. That's a fate that will never befall an IMAX film, not so much the cinema of the future as a cinema of the ideal. If George Lucas had used the revolutionary giant-sized Canadian system – or, heaven help us, it's even more spectacular domed screen cousin OMNIMAX – there wouldn't have been a few gasps in every audience, there would have been heart attacks. Yes, it really is that good.

As it is, everyone walking out of the auditorium is walking on air. Hardly surprising as they've just come out from under a screen at least ten times bigger than anything they're used to seeing: a literal wall of image that engulfs their range of vision. The IMAX film frame is three times the size of the normal 70mm movie frame you might see projected onto screens at Leicester Square or big cinemas around the country. Even when projected onto something seven stories tall, the sheer size of the film itself allows for an extraordinary sharpness of image that few could compete with. Coupled with the severely pitched seating that puts everyone in the auditorium far closer to the screen than they would ever normally be, the



▲ *Bradford's IMAX projector.*



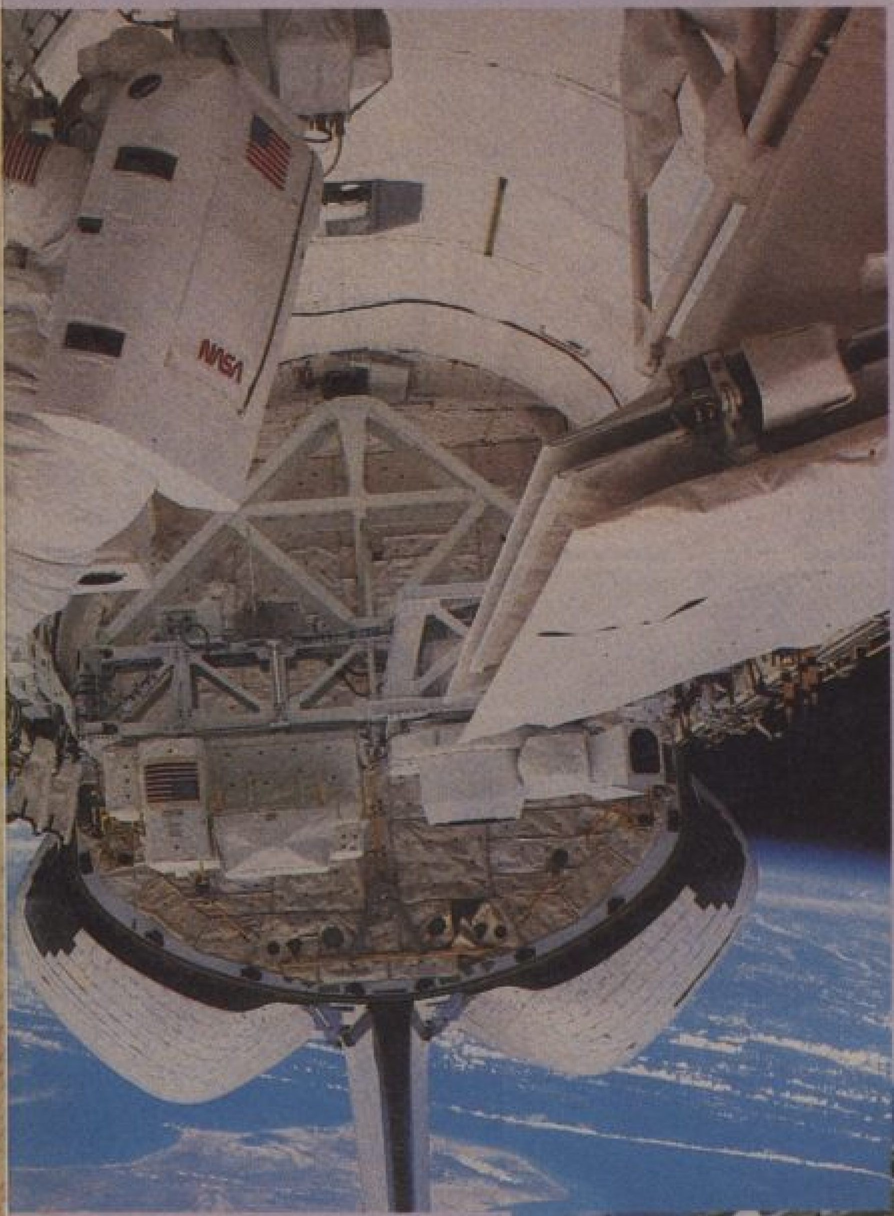
▲ *''The Dream is Alive'' – shot by shutt*



▼ *Super X packs them in.*

than life!

It's the nearest thing to being there. Matt Bielby reports on IMAX and Super X, simulations that really stimulate.



astronauts themselves.

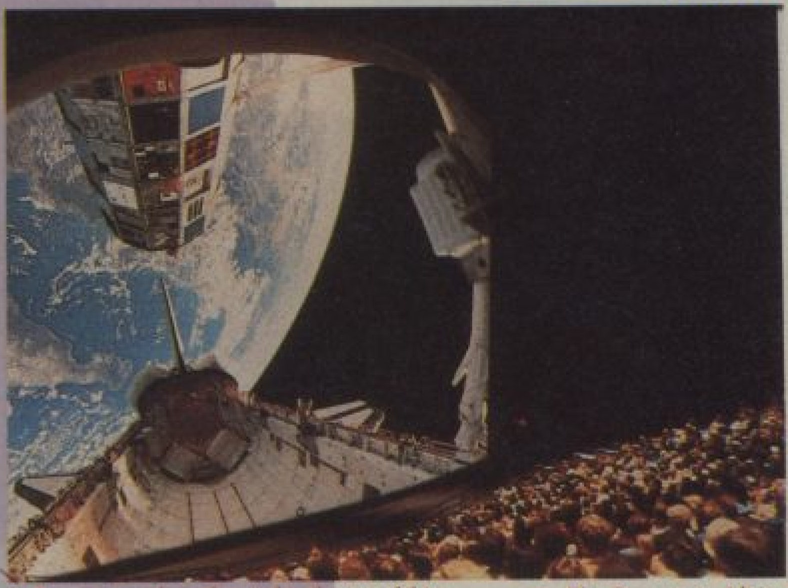
system leaves everyone with the impression of being actually inside the action. If it seems like I'm raving, it's because I am.

The system is the brain child of three Canadian film-making friends who built their first "rolling loop" projector in time to be the sensation of the 1970 Japan Exposition in Osaka with their first film, Tiger Child.

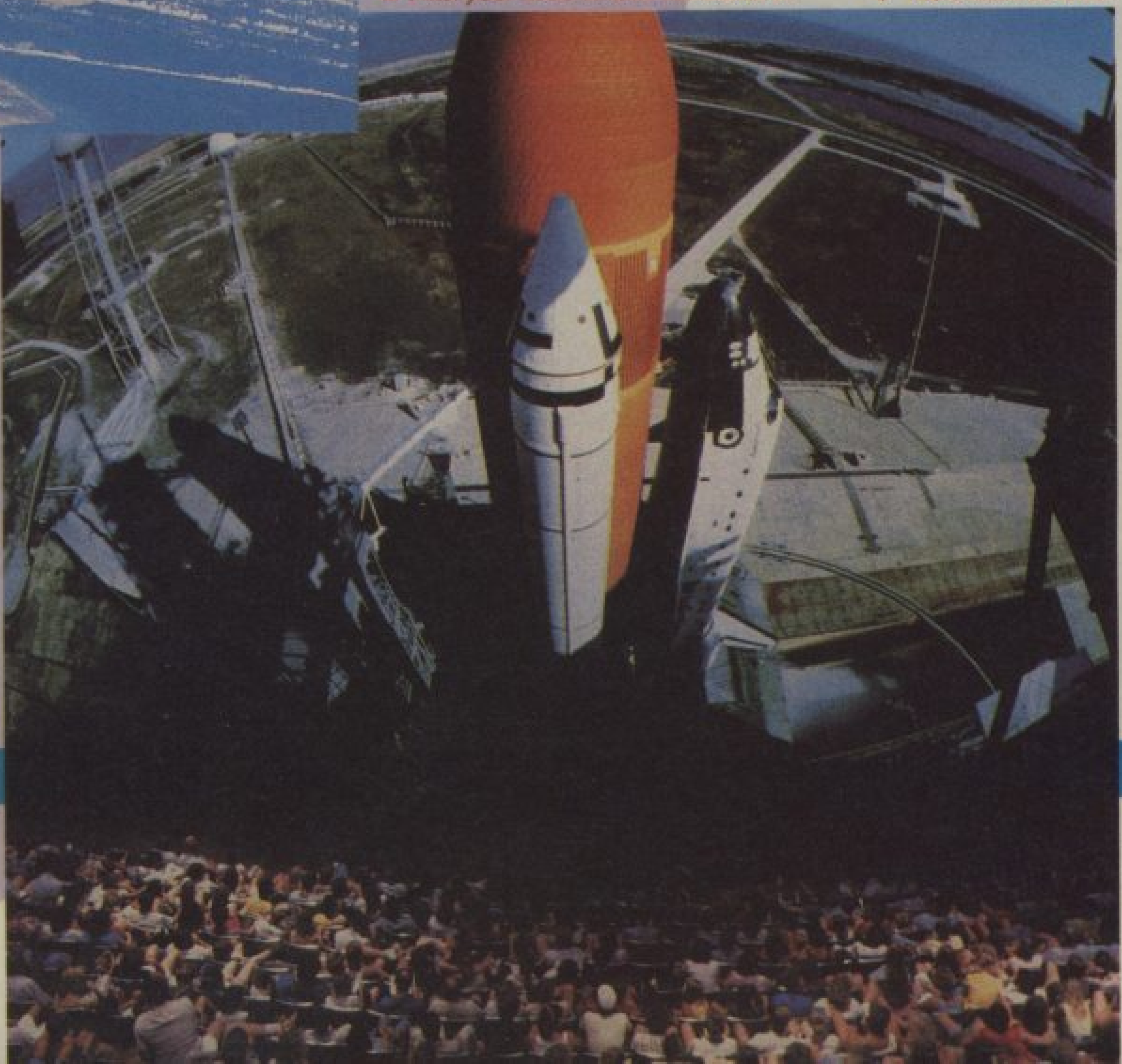
Since then 55 or so films have been made, each one vying to be more spectacular than those before. Most have been pseudo-documentaries devoted to subjects like flight, space exploration, natural history the Grand Canyon. All are around 40 minutes in length and pack them in at the museums, planetariums and cultural centres that house most of the fifty odd screens, in the main telling you far less about any particular subject than your average Horizon programme, but letting you feel much more. Brighter, crisper, larger than anything you have seen before, a film like the space shuttle film "The Dream is Alive" affects the audience like a cross between a roller coaster and a religious experience. Experiences like using the earth suspended blue and massive above you, forcing the eye to roam across the screen trying to take it all in cannot fail to move you. If someone hasn't already called IMAX the seventh wonder of the modern world, well, they should have.

Super X is a very different system. Unlike IMAX, it doesn't use a massive, awe inspiring

Continued on page 112



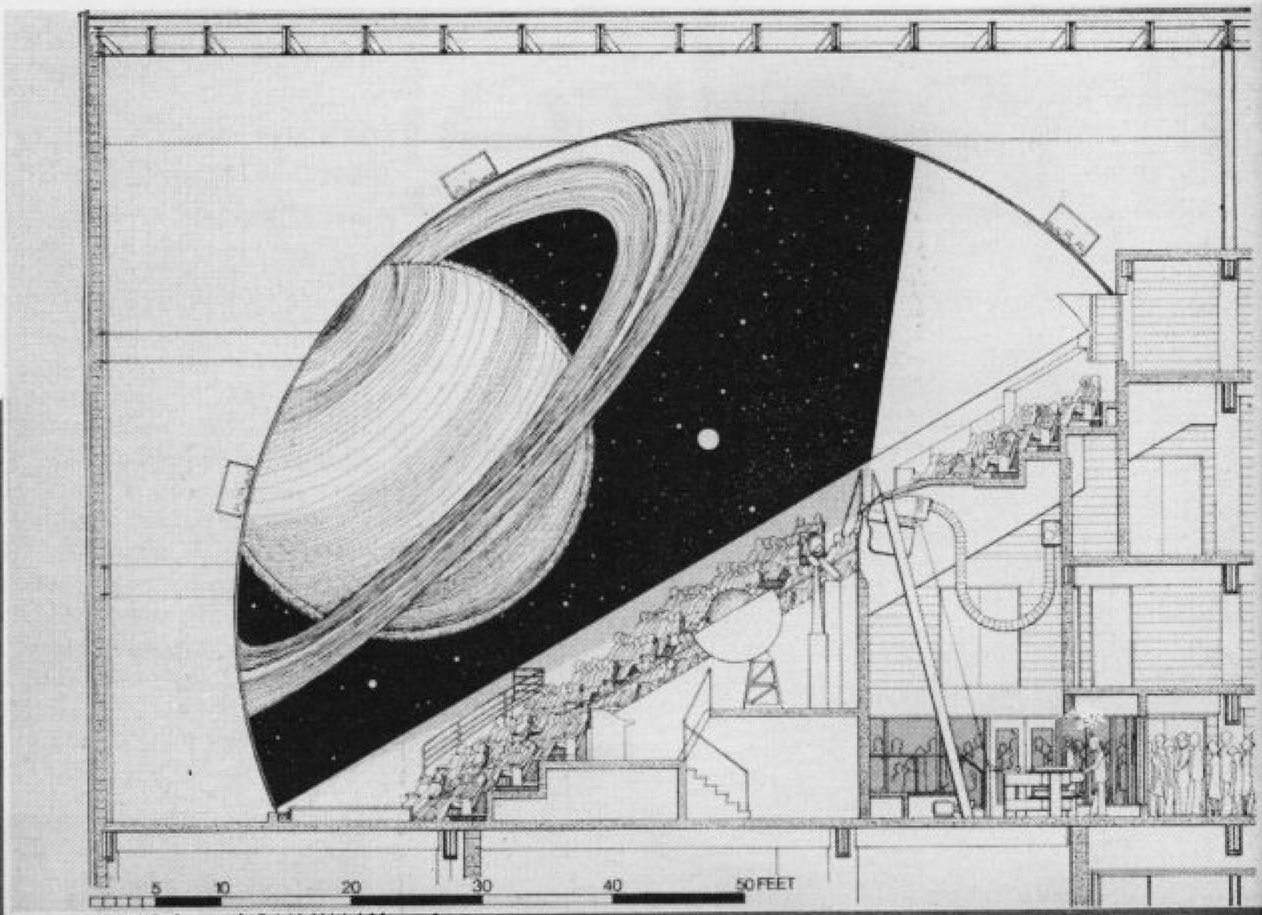
▲ Twist your head to take the world in.



▼ The Dream is Alive.

screen for it's effect – indeed, the films it uses are shot on normal video tape and played on a screen not too much larger than one you could buy for your home – but adds the sensation of movement to the experience. Dubbed the Prokon, Super X's capsule is like a very simplified version of an aircraft flight simulator. Fourteen passengers sit in the dark watching the screen at the front – like IMAX the films are interchangable and are normally of the "exciting ride" variety – and cling on as their environment swoops and judders in time with image.

The visual images on video tape are linked to the hydraulic motion system the capsule stands upon, each pitching, rolling or falling movement seeming far more spectacular in conjunction with the film than they would on their own. There are aircraft, rally car, helicopter and white water rafting sims available now – it only takes a few moments to reprogram it for another ride – with many more being produced all the time.



▲ A typical domed OMNIMAX projector.

Where to see them

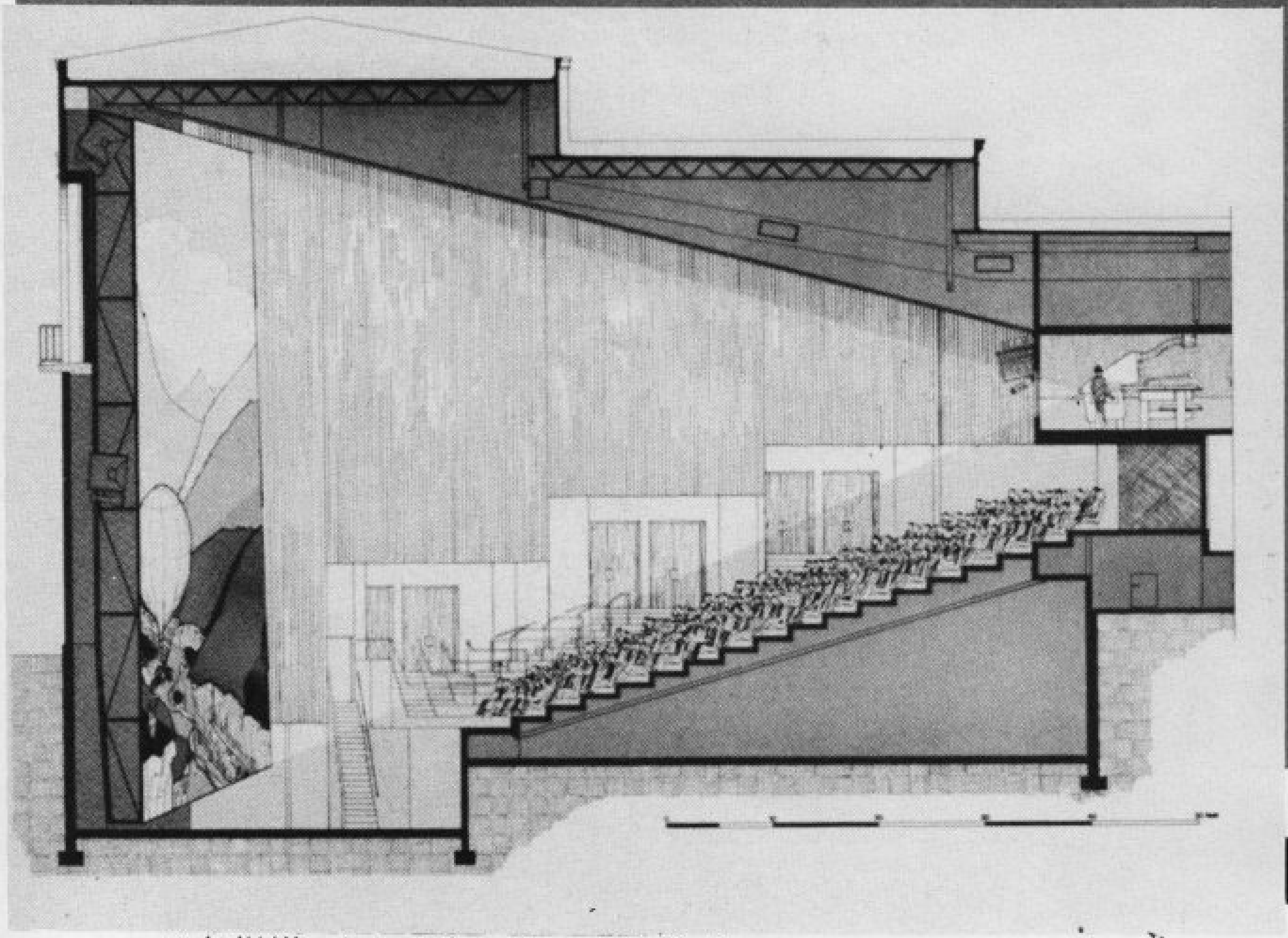
IMAX screens aren't exactly thick on the ground. The only one in the United Kingdom is at The National Museum of Photography, Film and Television which, due to the current policy of locating such things around the nation, is located in Bradford, West Yorkshire. The 52'4" x 63'8" screen has showings on the hour throughout the afternoon every day except Monday, with evening showings Thursday and Friday at 7.30 pm.

You can go and see the giant helicopter round the back, and visit the rest of the museum's excellent exhibits while you're at it. Apparantly most people go back again and again after they have seen a film. For more information phone the museum on 0274 727488 for programme details.

Super X simulators are located at the Needles Pleasure Park, Alum Bay on the Isle of Wight, the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovil in Somerset and other temporary locations around the country. One will appear in the British pavilion at Expo '88 in Brisbane, and another will be on the Microprose stand at the PC show this year, hopefully not making their 16-bit sims look a bit sick. If the manufacturer Super X has its way, of course, you soon won't be able to move for them, and they promise that it's success will pave the way for much more spectacular and involved rides along the same lines.

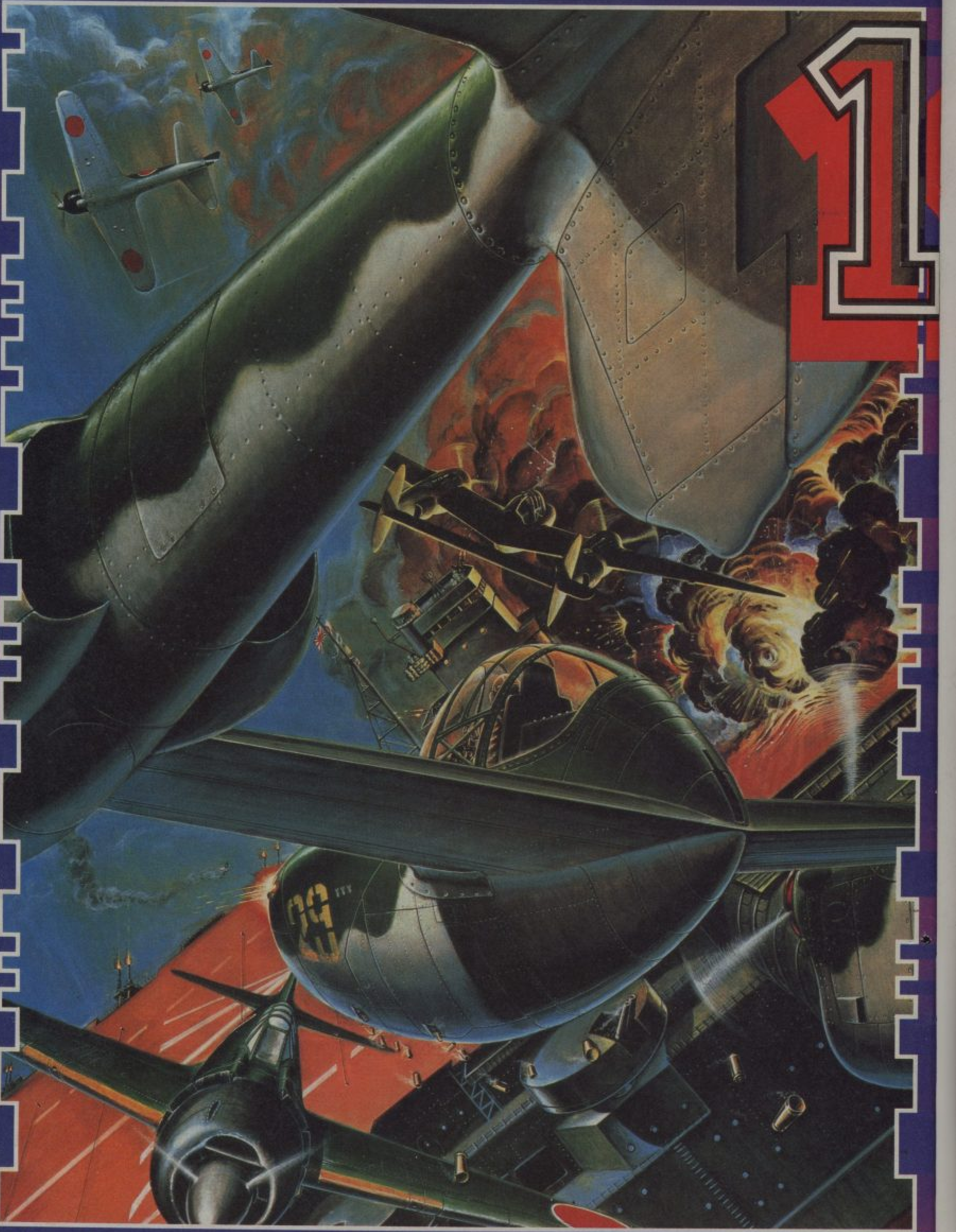

▲ An operator slaves over his hot controls.


▲ The National museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford.


▲ An IMAX projector similar to the one in Bradford.


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ARCADE

The Olympics are here again and the arcade manufacturers haven't been slow to get their new sports games into the arcades. Clare Edgeley takes a look at Record Breakers as well as reviewing the cutest game we've seen in ages – The New Zealand Story.



▲ *A perfect landing.*

RECORD BREAKERS

A miserable summer never stops the athletics, especially with the Olympics looming on the horizon. And what better way to get into training than a quick trip down to your local arcade to play one of the several new sports simulations.

Taito's Recordbreakers is the latest sports sim in the arcades and features ten finger numbing events ranging from running through to polevaulting and gymnastics.

Recordbreakes is a one/two player game with a vertically split screen. As you race against your partner in the 100 metres, you can see him tearing ahead of you on your side of the screen, while down the middle is a birds' eye view of the track for a spot check on position and how much further you've got to go. There are two qualifying rounds for each event and you must get through one of them. This at least gives both competitors a sporting chance to enter the big race.

The first event – 100 metres – is a doddle. As soon as the start pistol goes, thump the start button and start wiggling the joystick backwards and forwards to build up speed. Whoever designed the joysticks needs his head seeing to. They are thin and spindly and about two inches long.

With no advance warning of the humiliation to come I entered the weightlifting contest. Two hefty body builders stand on the screen waiting for the start signal. Punch the button and attack the joystick again.



▲ *It's difficult to get to the finish in the time limit.*

There was no way I could build up enough strength to qualify in this event until I noticed, at the beginning of the contest the table of weights I was trying to lift. What a pillock. Start off at 230kg and work your way up to 270kg. It's a lot easier. Another tip is to watch the weightlifter's face. If it goes blue with the strain, stop the joystick and then try another burst of strength to around the 80 mark and then hit the stop button.



▲ *270 Kg looks too much for challenger 1.*

Next are the horizontal bars. This one's a lot easier, though timing is important. Hit the start button, waggle the joystick as your competitor swings round and round and round on the bar, then hit the stop button. With luck he should fly off at top speed, hit the mat and stand up. With rotten luck he'll head for the ground at breakneck speed – head first.

Right. On with this gruelling ordeal. The Hurdles. Now this should be easy. Just hit the start button, waggle the joystick and remember to hit the button to jump your player over the hurdles. Unfortunately it's not that easy. Crouched over that wretched joystick I skinned my knuckles trying to build up speed and concentrated so hard that I couldn't time the jumps. My character just ploughed through the lot.

Freestyle swimming sounds simple, and it is if you remember to let your player breath! Alternatively you can try to drown him. There's an oxygen meter in this event and you must keep an eye on this to tell you when to hit the beath button. And all the time you're accumulating joystick blisters.

The shot putt is mostly a matter of timing the build up of strength and knowing when to release the putt. It's less of a strain than some of the other events, and at least the angle meter is some help.

The same goes for the long horse – all pretty straight forward. But wait for it – the hop, skip and jump should keep you on your toes. Use the start button for the run up, beat the hell out of the joystick for speed and then use the button again for hop, skip and while you're jumping attack the joystick even harder to keep your character in the air.

The last flagging event is the 400m relay and takes real stamina. It's fairly simple, just punch the button at the right moment to pass the baton and keep that joystick moving to qualify in 40 seconds.

Recordbreakers could have been an enjoyable contest, and should be. Unfortunately, it was spoilt by the miniscule and unwieldly joystick.

ACTION

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

"A daring kidnap. Young kiwis snatched by aging Walrus," scream the tabloids. National outrage. People wring their hands and then do nothing.

Unless that is you are a kiwi. A bird of brain, but a helpless, flightless youngster who's ready to brave the baddies to free his mates. And so the cute and addictive *New Zealand Story* starts at the entrance to the zoo. Armed with a bow and unlimited supply of arrows you flutter into action, zapping a number of hungry foxes who have just picked up your scent.

Immediately obstacles become apparent as you look at the map and find you're at the furthest point from your goal. Arrows point upwards and to the right. Building blocks tower in your path and these you must hop over using the jump button. Zap a few more foxes, pick up the fruit they leave behind in their wake and move on. You soon reach the edge of the screen and realise that the only way out is upwards.

Suddenly you're under an airbourne attack. Baddies drift down from above, each riding what looks to be half a potato. Jump up and without hitting the potato, knock the baddie off his perch with a well placed arrow and take flight in his makeshift chariot.

Now you can travel upwards far faster than if you had to rely on jumping from block to block. And it's here that the action really starts. Portals appear in the brick wall, spilling out hedgehogs hanging onto balloons, armoured turtles and penguins riding rubber ducks. It seems the whole zoo is out to stop you. Shoot these and avoid the balls and other missiles they lob at you.

If you have the misfortune to be knocked off your perch, you'll fall to the bottom of the screen. In which case guide your character to land on the nearest block so that you can start the journey back up on foot. As soon as a flying nasty appears, shoot it and capture its balloon, duck, cot or whatever it happens to be riding and continue upwards.

Bonus weapons can be picked up on route – old fashioned fuse bombs, laser guns, fire balls and even a stop watch which freezes the enemy for a short time. Collect these and dropped fruit whenever you can.

As you climb higher the going gets tougher. Bats appear from nowhere to drop cone shaped missiles on your head – difficult to dodge, especially if you are trapped in a narrow tunnel between building blocks. Other hazards come in the shape of spikes attached to the ceilings of each level. Hit one of these and your balloon will burst. Just as deadly are the ground spikes positioned between blocks when jumping from tower to tower.

Eventually you'll find your kiwi friend and will be able to release him by touching his cage. An exit opens up taking you to the next level and another trapped kiwi.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking this is a straight up and down platforms game. There's a bit more to it. Handling the different weights of transport is one problem. Cradles, rubber ducks, potatoes and the like all drift at different rates, so check how quickly you can manoeuvre them before engaging battle with flying foxes and killer hedgehogs.

Another living hazard is a small devil complete with obligatory horns and tail. This nasty little character comes haring over for a quick conversion job and takes a lot of killing. One arrow is not enough. So beware, make sure you've got a quick balloon and a hefty weapon. Lasers are ideal in this case as they can be fired from a safe distance.

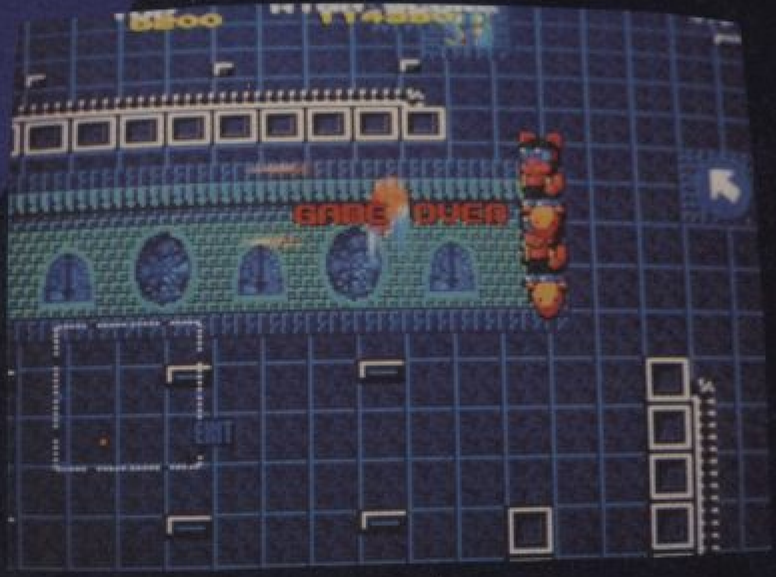
One helpful hint is to shoot the baddies so that their transport falls to the nearest block. Then nudge the balloon or cradle to an accessible position so that if you get shot down, you've got a back-up in reserve.

Later levels take you away from the brick wall scenario of the zoo to different backgrounds including a brilliant underwater scene where your intrepid kiwi dons goggles and snorkel. You'll have to come up for air every so often and to kill the baddies, take off your snorkel and spit jets of water at them. Great fun.

There's bags more to this fabulously playable little game, the further you get into it, the more you'll like it. It can be frustrating but it's never boring. So save the kiwis and bag a nasty today.



▲ *The arrows point you to the exit.*



▲ *Deadly teddies chase you everywhere.*

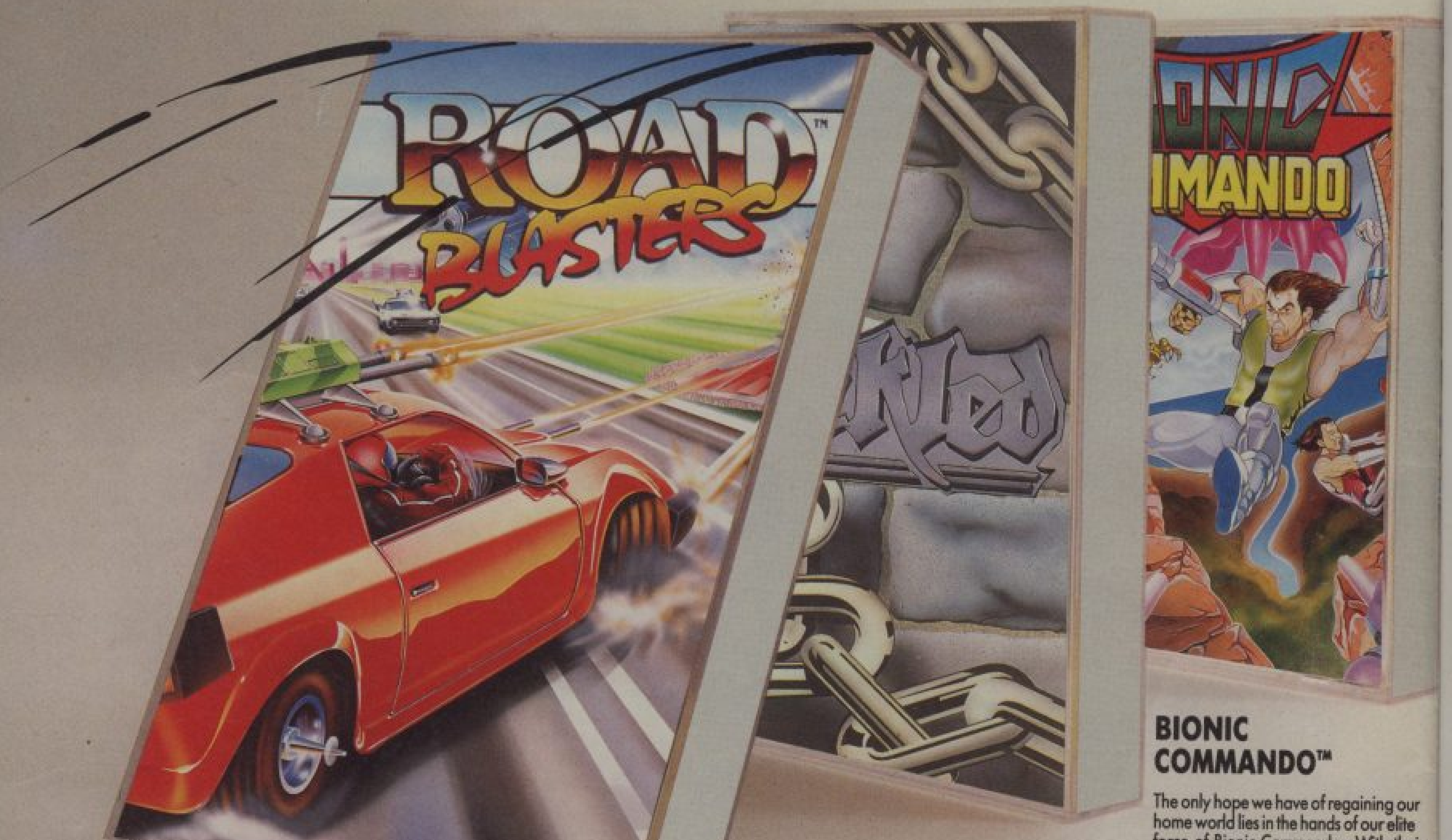


▲ *It's a long climb to the top.*

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Mean Machines

Tony Takoushi has never seen anything like, neither will you – Chan and Chan is the weirdest and whackiest game and the naughtiest game you are likely to see on a games console. Tony also taken a look at new shoot 'em up. Aleste, and a shooting game called Rescue Mission as well as delivering his usual collection of tips and high scores.

Zelda

At last Japan's best selling Nintendo game is available in the UK.

The Legend of Zelda is a massive arcade adventure packed full of dragons, imprisioned princesses, traps and pitfalls.

Princess Zelda has been kidnapped and is being held captive by an evil Gannon. Guess what? It's down to you as the dashing hero to rescue the fair lady by finding the eight lost pieces of the 'Wisdom Triforce' – hidden by lady Zelda before she was captured.

There is an enormous country to examine, with nine secret labyrinths to be located and examined, not to mention the Overworld where you start your travels.

There are dozens of things to collect like a sword, boomerang, bow and arrow, candle, wand, whistle, rings,letters, ladders, shields, keys and bombs to name just a few of them.

You play by running around by slashing and avoiding the nasties, as you reach the side of the screen it scrolls, there is a map to help you keep track of where you are and if you press the B button an inventory screen scrolls down allowing you to choose your weapons.You can amass coins to buy weapons and collect bombs and other items left when certain nasties are killed. There are powerups and bonuses hidden in the walls as well as a fair smattering of puzzles to be solved before you can gain entry to parts of the game.

Graphics and sound are excellent and again playability is supreme. It needs to be, as the price tag is a bit hefty at £39.

- ► GRAPHICS 7
- ► SOUND 8
- ► PLAYABILITY 9
- ► OVERALL 9



▲ *Zelda has a unique position save feature.*

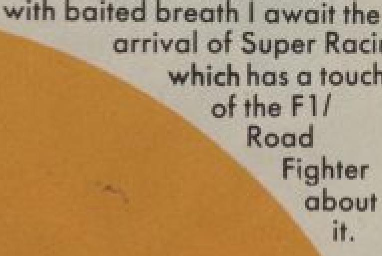


▲ *Japan's best selling games – now available.*

News

● The PC Engine has dropped in price in Japan. It now sells for £70 and has *R-Type* bundled with it. Still no news of a UK launch though.

Sega has set up a UK Club as from August. If you want to register for the newsletter and details of the Sega Hotline then pop along to the Mastertronic stand (the Sega bit!) at the PC Show to get the lowdown on what's happening on the Sega console and arcade front in the build up to Christmas!



▲ *Super Racing.*

● I love a good driving thrash as much as the next man, so with baited breath I await the arrival of Super Racing which has a touch of the F1/Road Fighter about it.

Punch-out

Nintendo are pretty chuffed with their boxing game. Not suprising really as it carries a Mike Tyson endorsement.It is in the shops now for your Ninendo so yours truly decided to invite it into my console for a sparring match.

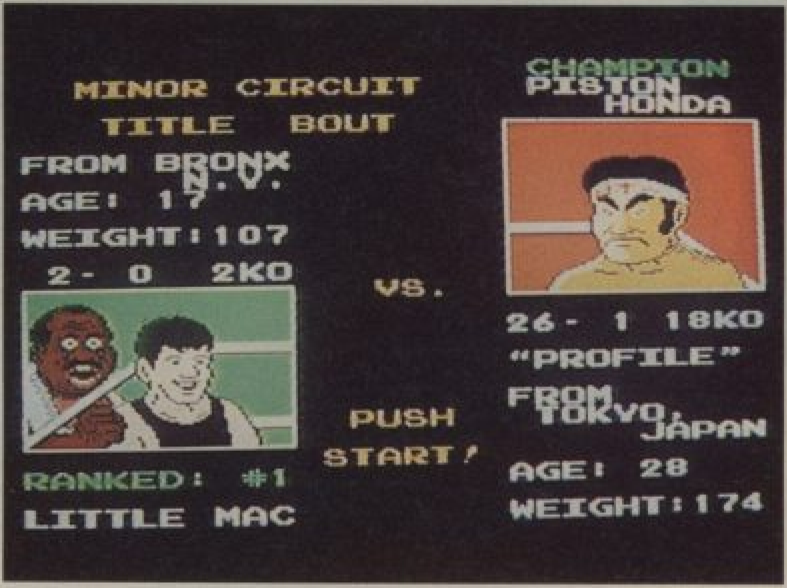
There are ten opponents to



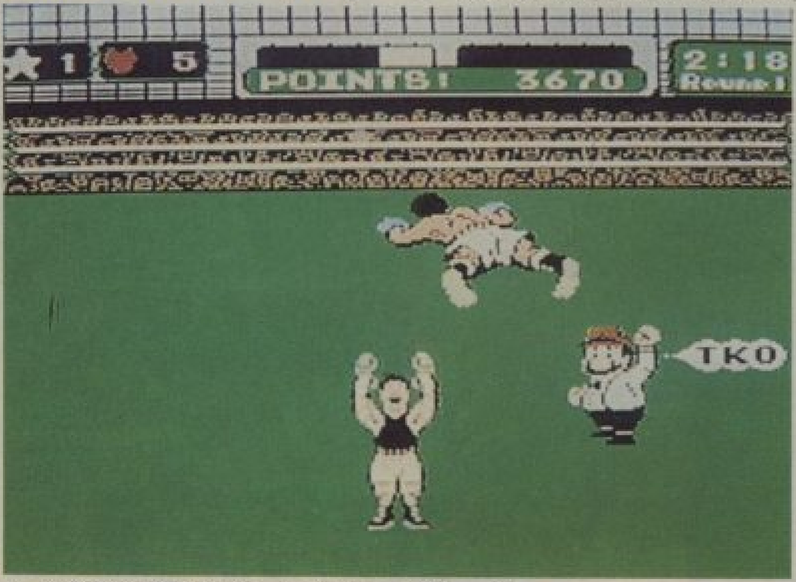
▲ *Mario is the referee.*

overcome before you can indulge in your dream bout of trying to give Mike Tyson a good thumping (I must admit the idea does appeal to me !).It is very well presented with good linking screens of characters and messages.

The ten opponents are Glass Joe, Von Kaiser, King



▲ *Can you reach the final bout against Tyson.*



▲ *A KO for Takoushi – but where is Tyson?*

Hoppo, Bald Bull, Piston Honda, Don Flamenco, Great Tiger, Mr Sandman,, Soda Popinski and Super Maco Man. There are three circuits to be completed Minor, Major and World, each circuit having a number of opponents which have to be beaten before promotion comes your way.

One nice feature is the use of password codes so that if you complete any of the circuits you are promoted and given a password. This password can be entered if your game finishes allowing you entry to the circuit you bowed out on.

To win a bout you need a KO or a technical KO which is when you knock your opponent over three times or by a points decision if the match goes the full three rounds.

The playing screen has a stamina meter, a stars count (number of uppercut punches available), heart which shows your ability to throw punches, if you are too tired you turn purple and can only avoid the opponents punches, points scored elapsed time and round. At the end of each round your trainer gives you advice on how to beat your opponent while the opponent babbles very stupid but funny comments, 'like when can I go to sleep', or 'I will conquer you '. Graphics and sound are good. Your boxer is simple to control (good animation) while the other boxers detailed and smoothly animated. They are amusing to watch with their little dances and expressions. I actually sat in front of the monitor and roared with laughter at their antics. You can punch to either side of the head, or give body blows as well as ducking and weaving to give some pretty complex combinations. Again this Nintendo game is very playable. You have to analyse your opponent's movements whilst using some nifty footwork.

Punchout will not disappoint you,it is a truly enjoyable piece of software...



▲ *Gary Williams enters the ring.*

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 7
- ► PLAYABILITY 8
- ► OVERALL 8



▲ *Wrestling is a Nintendo no no.*

Pro-Wrestling

Pro Wrestling is the weakest of this month's new Nintendo games. Not for content. It features a one or two player facility and a choice of opponents (Fighter Hayabusa, star man, Kin Corn Karn, Giant Panther, The Amazon, King Slender and Great Puma).

In one player mode a game consists of a five minute single match against the computer, your ranking is five and this



▲ *Yawn time – not brawn time.*

goes up with every opponent beaten.

When you reach first position you wrestle with The Champ. Beat him and you have to defend your crown.

There are over 20 throws and techniques to learn, each involving the joypad and combinations of firebuttons and position to the other wrestler.

The graphics are plain, sound OK'ish and play is pretty mediocre. This is not a bad game it just fails to grab your attention or enthusiasm.

Now that Wrestling is to be taken off TV it could be the kind of game to play on a rainy afternoon.

- ► GRAPHICS 5
- ► SOUND 5
- ► PLAYABILITY 5
- ► OVERALL 5

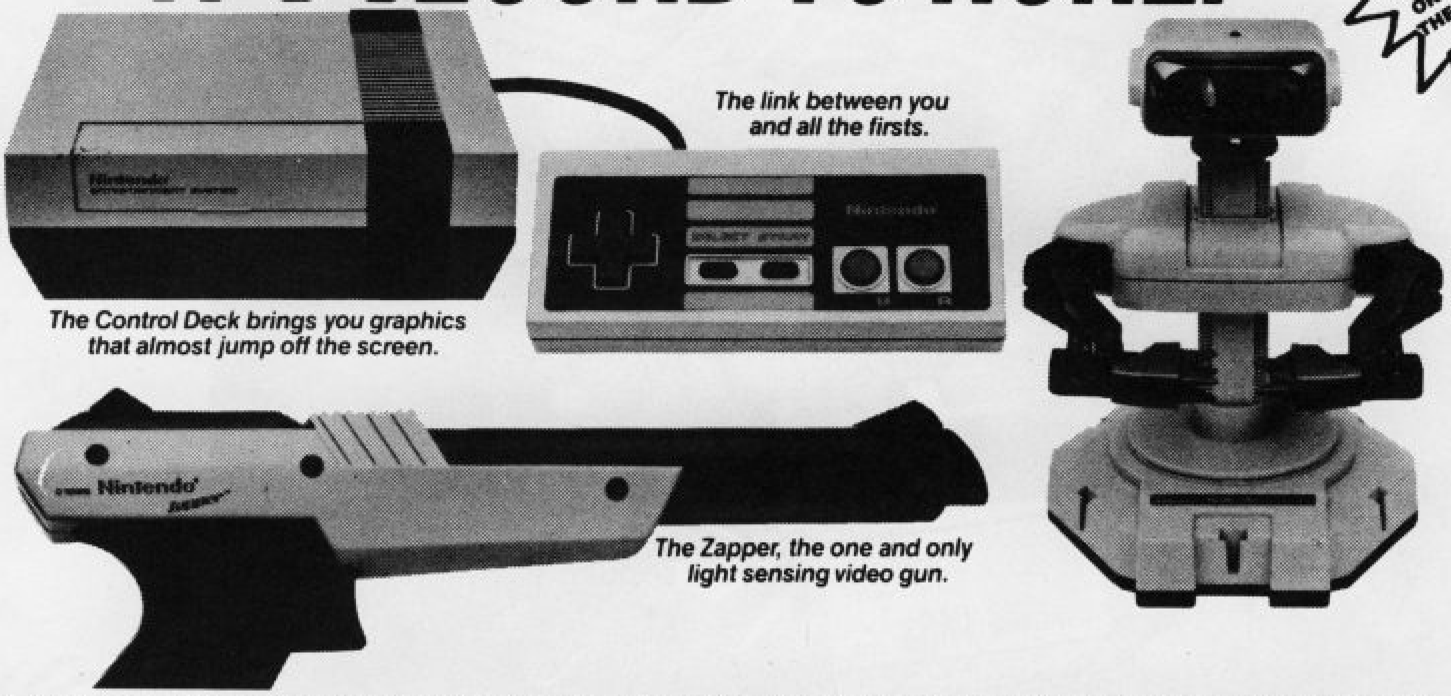

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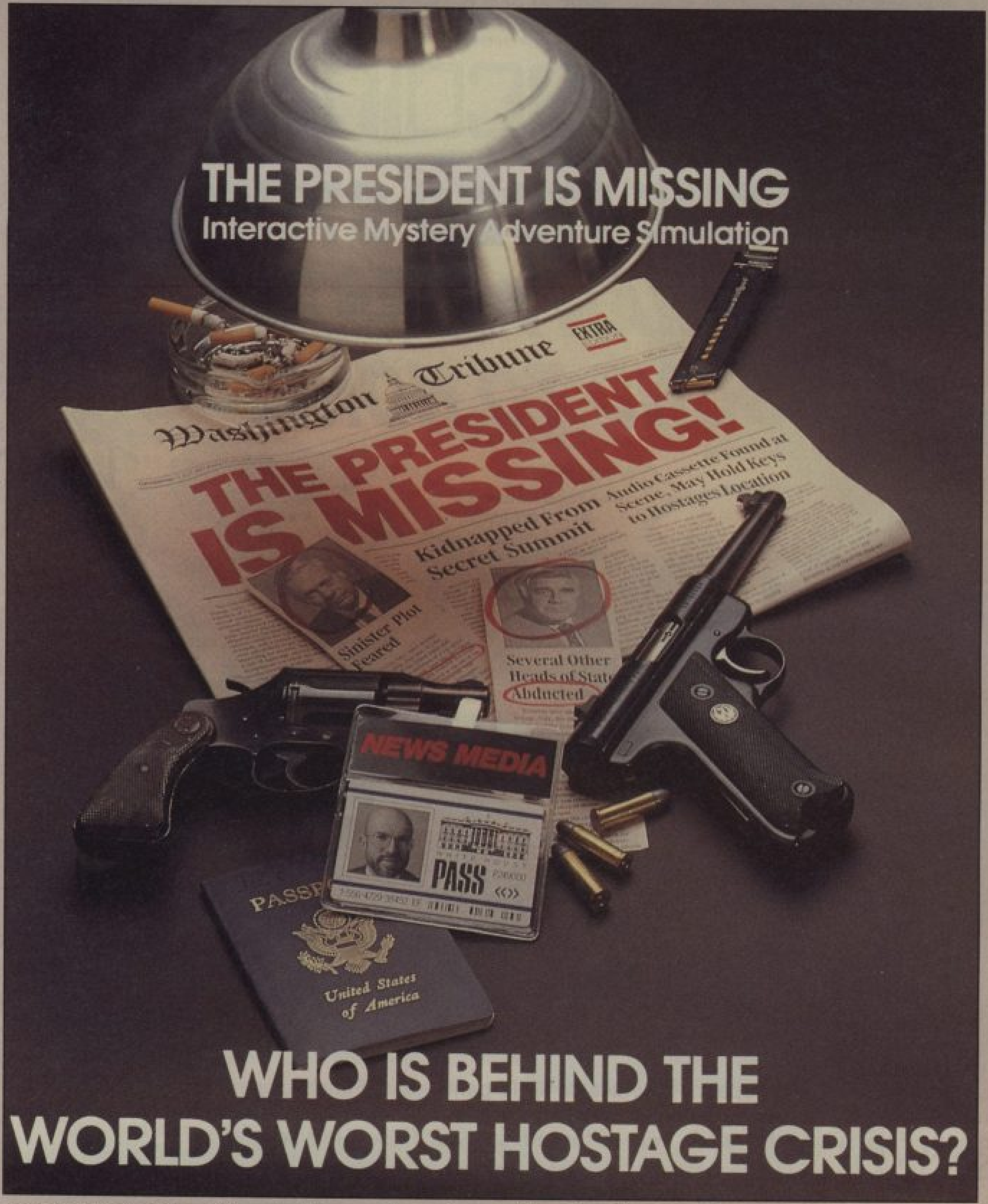
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Mailbag

Perhaps we've been a touch mean in the past. As from now, the best letter to Mailbag each month wins a brand spanking new C + Vg T-shirt! So new, we're not even quite sure what they look like yet! So now you've no excuse, get writing to: Mailbag, Computer and Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

●I often wonder about the mentality of people who feel obliged to be abusive about people they have probably never met. What do they get out of it? The cachet of having slagged off a famous name in the national press? The dubious pleasure of pointing out their abusive letters to friends and sniggering over their words in newsagents?

Take David Giffog's letter about Wayne in the July issue of C+VG. This man has come to the conclusion that Wayne is a pervert purely on the impression he has of him from a picture in a magazine. And why not? Surely everyone knows that people who have long bleached hair are always perverts? Thank God the police are not so biased or there would be a lot of innocent people in our prisons. I imagine that David has short brown hair and wears smart, neat clothes (rather like Dr Cripin did.)

I accept that looks are a matter of personal taste and David may not find Wayne attractive (perhaps he also prefers men with short brown hair!) but most people who reach a reasonable level of maturity are willing to accept that not all people's tastes are going to be exactly the same. David doesn't seem to have reached this level yet which leads me to suspect that he is either very young, or at least 'young at heart'.

Most people have no difficulties telling men from women, but if David is confused by people who have long hair, then perhaps he is looking at the wrong signs. Thre are a number of very good books for children on the differences between the male and female of the species and if he cares to read them, I'm sure he will be able to work out why the two genders are different. (Something a little more basic than the length of their hair, David!)

As for intelligence, I hardly need to go into this do I? Wayne writes for a national magazine about a hobby that he enjoys and plays well. David writes a childish and abusive letter about people he has never met in order to gain attention. Which is the most intelligent?

Most of the people who have met Wayne have found him friendly and easy-going, quite willing to put himself out for others, whether it is by talking to new PBMers on the phone and explaining why they are having problems with a certain game, or putting people up for the night at his place when they come down to London and then miss the last train home, but these are things you only learn about someone from knowing them. You cannot deduce what a person is like by looking at a picture of him in a magazine.

Linda Little
Redhill

Editor's reply: Actually Linda, we at C + Vg tend to suspect that nice bloke though he is, Wayne is a bit of a pervert

And congratulations for being our first T-shirt winner, for having the funniest letter on the page.

●I've been a *Computer and Video Games* reader for some time. Way back in October 1982 when I first bought it, it had detailed, trustworthy reviews, interesting articles and the shining glory was the Adventure Helpline, which was the best column in any mag anywhere and generally made me feel good about having a computer. Alas, today's C + Vg is only a shadow of the magazine it once was. Recently you introduced more general interest items into the magazine like the film and video review, the comic strip and review page, PBM etc. I applauded these at first, but I think now you should admit these 'experimental' articles haven't worked and get rid of them. The adventure Helpline has now all but disappeared, and there are less actual words per page of C + Vg than any other mag.

At least this month things seem to be improving. The new charts, Winner stays on, better pokes and the letters page is getting more serious, but there's still virtually no Helpline. However, there is still a long way to go, and that is why I now read the excellent ACE instead of C + Vg.

Gareth Williams
Swansea

Editor's reply: Keep watching C + Vg, Gareth. The only thing you can be sure of is that like it or loath it, it never stays the same for long.

●Whilst looking through your July issue I came across the reiview of Last Ninja 2. Observing the cool pictures which I think are the best I've seen on the 64 and Speccy, I came across the captions. The picture of the Ninja poking his staff at the boat said 'mad bikers are out to get you'. Then thinking how odd that was I saw a scond caption with the picture of a biker after the Ninja which said 'Why is that Ninja poking his staff at the boat?'. Does this earn me a game?

John Fowler
Broxbourne, Herts

Editor's reply: If you thought that was good, you should have seen the Dungeon Master/Winner Stays On mix up! And no, you can't have a game.

●I think you've got a great mag going, but I've decided to warn you. Of what, I hear you cry? Well, let me get straight to the point. I have a fanzine that if put on the market would reduce your sales to pulp. It's called the Digitised Directory and it's been a great hit with my mates. As it won't be available in most newsagents for a couple of years (I'm only twelve!) you'd better start to work around the clock to improve you're mag. Let me give you a few tips that will go down well with the dregs of society:

1) Although you're ratings are quite inventive, you should use percentages as for some reason they are more popular.

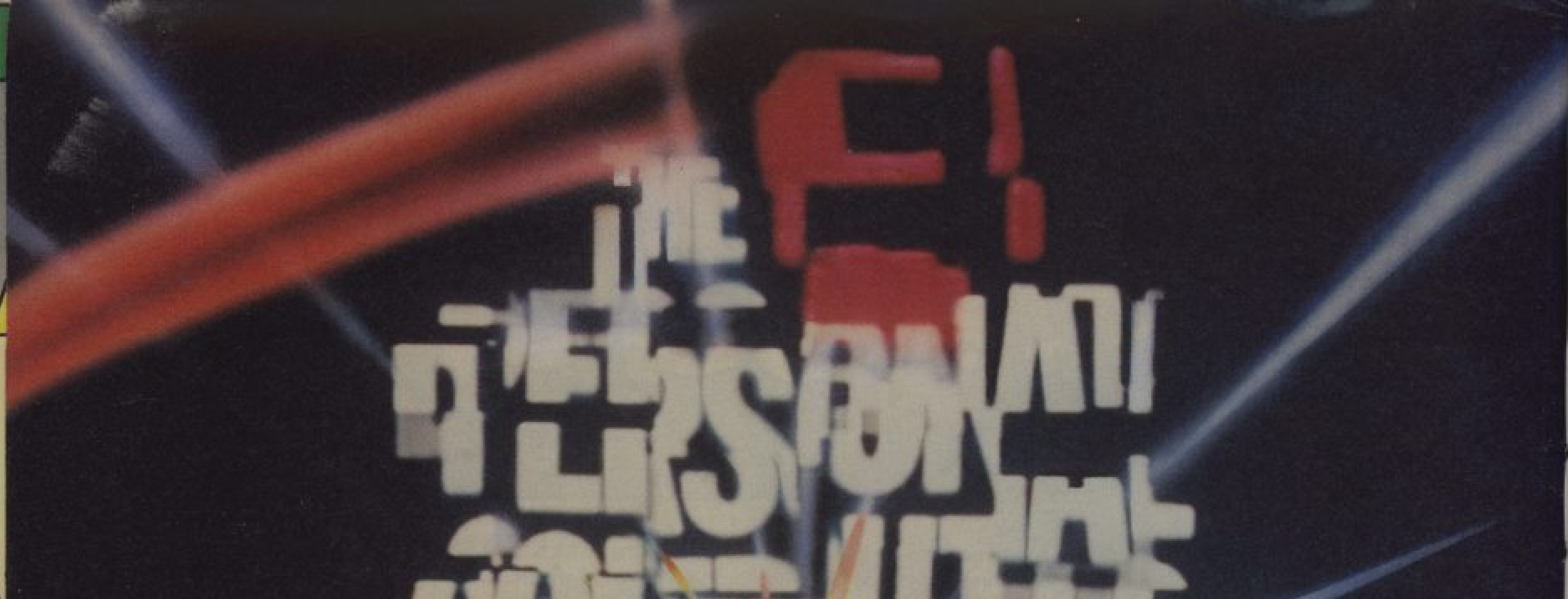
2) Expand you're Mean Machines section, because nowadays the serious gamers don't find two meagre pages enough to make them interested.

3) Bring in a new section every few months or so to keep people buying.

I hope these points help you bring a little spice to the magazine.

Alexander Debenham-Burton
Essex

Editor's reply: We thought we did bring in new sections every few months! What about Fax, Playmasters, Out To Lunch...



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Oh no! ...... missed.

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There will also be daily Personal Computer Conferences covering topics from small business to music, to help you get more from your computer.
To obtain more information about the conferences please call 01-948 5166.
So if you think you've given the current batch of games your best shots, come to the Personal Computer Show and discover a new world of excitement.
To attend on the public days (either 16th, 17th or 18th September) just complete and return the coupon with a cheque/postal order for £3.00.
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Out To Lunch

John Minson is out to lunch in the posh Savoy Hotel . . . where he unearths a communist plot and poses the question — ARE YOUR GAMES BRAINWASHING YOU?

Right! This is the big one! I have personally discovered a subversive, communist plot based within the software industry. Its sole aim is to poison young and impressionable minds (my own is safe, being old and poisonous already). These reds call themselves Imageworks, but that's just a shallow disguise for that well known, international subversive organisation Mirrorsoft, WHICH USES OFFICES NOT A MILLION MILES AWAY FROM THOSE OF THAT LEFT-WING PAPER, THE DAILY MIRROR!!! (Hey, this Sun speak is fun - or should that be FUN !!!)

Anyhow, I infiltrated their EVIL gathering for a three course luxury lunch at that well known haunt of Trots and Anarchists, London's Savoy Hotel (after all, even revolutionaries need to eat). On the surface everything seemed innocent enough until Tom Watson, A MAN WHO SHARES RED DEREK HATTON'S LOVE OF EXPENSIVE SUITS, stood up to tell us about their new thinly disguised propaganda in the form of so-called games.

First there's *Foxx Fights Back,* in which Mr Foxx picks up a machine gun and blasts away at chickens, squirrels and (get this) huntsmen!!! Damn those commie hunt saboteurs, this hits at the very fabric of British life - ie the right to go 'Haw! Haw!' a lot and kill small, furry animals.

But there's worse. What would you make of *Fernandez Must Die?* An incitement to terrorism or what?!? Just because the Latin American country of El Diablo has been given a taste of tough medicine by one General Fernandez, you're supposed to sympathise with the shirking, work-shy peasants who complain about being shipped off to death camps and...

Enough of the irony. What I really want to talk about is Politics and Computing - or rather politics and computing, because this is not primarily a Party affair (I'm more anarchist that party animal). But I can guarantee that already some of you are reaching for the Basildon Bond to scream to Uncle Eugene: 'KEEP POLITICS OUT OF THE MAGAZINE!' Well, sorry, but I've got bad news for you. You can't.

Politics is part of our everyday life, whether you like it or not. The problem is that most of the time it lurks silently below the surface, so that we never even notice it. It's only when somebody makes the effort to produce a political statement that people get upset and start shouting about propaganda. But virtually everything has some political significance.

Now as we're concerned with the world of computers, let's look at how that boldly sweeping statement applies to your micro. There's nothing political about all those games you play, is there? Well, what about the military scenarios? What is the pumping iron of *Combat School,* followed by the mission to kill terrorists, really saying? That it might be a better world if we all talked together at the UN? And what about *Platoon,* with it's kill the gooks gameplay? That's hardly the humanist message of the film - but then again, there's not much money in pacificism.

I'm not suggesting for one moment that games like these will turn you into a *Full Metal Jacket* marine corps psycho. I'm not even suggesting that you should disagree with their philosophy of 'Join the Army to Meet People . . . Then kill Them.' What I am suggesting is that they contain a view of life - and that counts as propaganda in my book.

Now this may seem fairly trivial but I suspect that one way we learn about the world is through all the hidden signals that we receive, from television, magazines... computer programs even. If you play games which tell you that the way to win is by killing your enemies will you challenge the same sort of thinking when Maggie sends a task force to the Falklands or Ronnie bombs Gadaffi, or the Russians invade Afghanistan. You get the point?

If I was a politician, of whatever party, I would get somebody to produce a computer game which embodied my beliefs. How about Poll Tax - The Game, in which you have to round up people who don't pay the community charge to score the points. Of course you don't get so many for turning in the down and outs who live in cardboard boxes, but it's a way to start because they don't put up as much of a fight.

It's also nice to see a program like Codemaster's *Race Against Time.* Apart from the fact that it's raising money for a worthy cause and that its message is for a unified world battle against starvation, it features a black runner on its cover. A small point, maybe, but it could serve as a reminder that in South Africa blacks are treated as inferior citizens. It's all very well to talk about keeping politics out of sport, out of music, out of computer games, but in certain countries it's impossible to avoid politics because they make a large number of people suffer! Okay, now you can post those letters complaining that I'm obviously in the pay of the KGB (isn't it odd that nobody ever writes to complain that somebody is too Conservative in their views) and that this is a load of paranoid piffle. After all, there's nothing political about developing your reflexes shooting down missiles. Complain all you like, but I'm reminded of a cartoon in The Guardian in which Ronnie Reagan discovers that the person in charge of the USA's nuclear defences is a teenager, chosen because he was a computer games whizz. Silly, huh? There's no way you're training to fire missiles, drop bombs, initiate Armageddon.

Is there . . .?



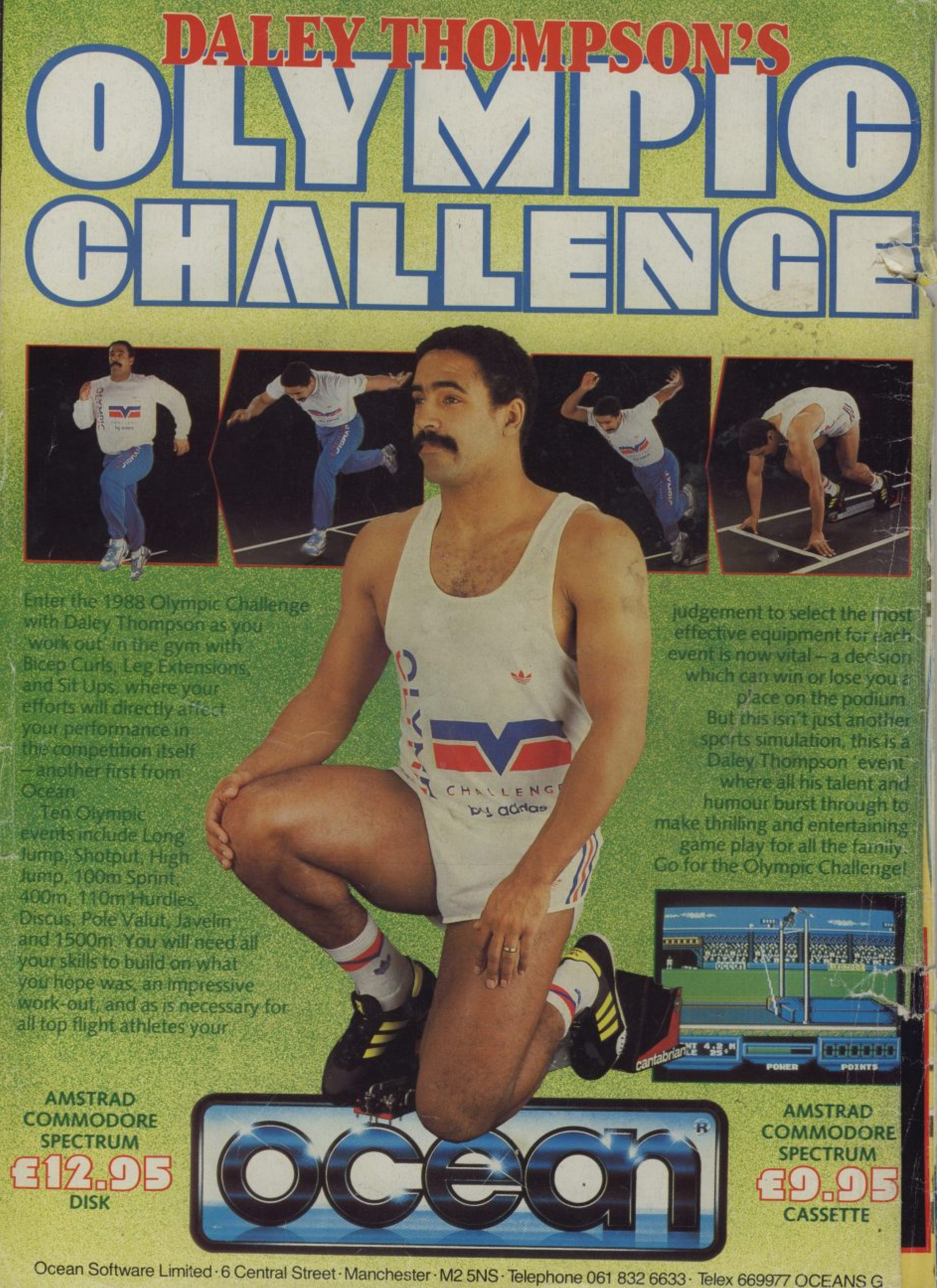
▲ *Foxx Fights Back.*



▼ *Fernandez Must Die.*



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